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Group Maintenance in James and the *Didache*

by

Chun Ling Yu

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis was composed by myself, that the work contained herein is my own. This work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification except as specified.

(Chun Ling Yu)

Abstract

This thesis argues that both the epistle of James and the Didache reflect tensions among the early Christian communities. The community concerns reflected in the texts of each book are investigated. Then their group maintenance strategies are analyzed. It will be shown that both writings have a similar concern on the harmony and cohesiveness of the Christian communities. On the other hand, there are differences as well as similarities in their strategies for reducing conflict.

An analysis of the community tensions reflected in James is given. This shows that James is not merely a random collection of traditional teachings beyond critical studies. Interpretative issues, including grammatical and rhetorical questions surrounding passages in James are considered carefully in order to explore the epistle's rhetorical situation. It will be argued that reflected in the text are real concerns for tensions among the audience, not merely general ethical instructions. Then results from social-scientific studies on social identity and conflict phenomena are bring in to further explore the possible group dynamics for communities in conflict. This enhances one's understanding of the meaning and purpose of the teaching in James. Theses group dynamics also fill in some gaps between passages in James. Hence, the coherence of the book is highlighted in the study. Lastly, these social-scientific theories also provide a framework for analyzing the strategies of maintaining group cohesiveness in James.

Next, a parallel study is given for the Didache. This study shows that besides chapters 11-15, which clearly reflect dangers of dispute among the early believers, other sections of the document also reflect the Didachist's concern for tensions among the early Christians. Then the group maintenance strategy of the Didache is analyzed using a similar framework as that used for James.

Finally, a comparison between the two writings is given from the perspective of group maintenance. Similarities and differences in the books' community concerns as well as their means for maintaining harmony in the community are highlighted to indicate the significance of these documents for the early Christian communities.

Lay Summary

This thesis explores how the epistle of James and the Didache reflect the tensions within early Christian communities. Passages in these two early Christian writings are examined in order to show that some concerns for conflicts among the community of believers can be discerned in the texts. Besides grammatical and rhetorical analysis, social-scientific theories about social-identity and conflict phenomena are also used to further the understanding of the group dynamics reflected in these two documents. It is argued that both works can be regarded as responses to community tensions within the early Church. Then, using results from social-scientific studies of conflict resolution as a framework, an analysis is given for the books' group maintenance strategies. Lastly, a comparison between these two works from the perspective of group maintenance is given. It will be shown that while the two documents show similar concerns for the harmony and cohesiveness of the Christian communities, they focus on different aspects of the conflict situations. Similarities and differences in their group maintenance strategies will also be highlighted. This would enhance one's understanding of the significance of these documents for the early Christian communities.

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Table of Contents

Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	D. N. Freeman, ed. *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York; London: Doubleday, 1992).
ACC	Alcuin Club Collections
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
ARA	*Annual Reviews of Anthropology*
ARS	*Annual Review of Sociology*
ASAM	Association of Social Anthropologists Monographs
ASR	*American Sociological Review*
ATJ	*Ashland Theological Journal*
AUSS	*Andrews University Seminary Studies*
BDAG	W. Bauer and F. W. Danker, eds. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1979).
BDF	F. Blass, A. Debrunner and R. W. Funk, eds. *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Cambridge: University Press, 1961).
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum theologicarum Lovaniensium
Bib	*Biblica*
BibInt	*Biblical Interpretation*
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
BJSP	*British Journal of Social Psychology*
BLT	*Brethren Life and Thought*
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentaries
BPSI	*Berkeley Publications in Society and Institutions*
BS	The Biblical Seminar
BSac	*Bibliotheca Sacra*
BT	*The Bible Translator*
BTB	*Biblical Theology Bulletin*
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
BZ	*Biblische Zeitschrift*
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBQ	*The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CC	Cascade Companions
ChQ	*Church Quarterly*
CNT	Commentaire du Nouveau Testament
ComThe	*Communication Theory*

CP	*Classical Philology*
CR:BS	*Currents in Research: Biblical Studies*
CRINT	Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
CTR	*Criswell Theological Review*
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
DRev	*Downside Review*
EBC	Expositor's Bible Commentary
ÉBib	Études bibliques
ECIL	Early Christianity and Its Literature
EDSS	L. H. Schiffman and J. C. VanderKam, eds. *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
EDT	Walter A. Elwell ed. *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology,* BRL 1 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1984).
EGL&MWBS	Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest Biblical Societies
EJSP	*European Journal of Social Psychology*
EQ	*Evangelical Quarterly*
ERSP	*European Review of Social Psychology*
ESEC	Emory Studies in Early Christianity
ET	*Evangelische Theologie*
ETL	*Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses*
ETS	Evangelical Theological Society
ExpT	*Expository Times*
FC	Fontes Christiani
FCNT	Feminist Companion to the New Testament and Early Christian Writings
FoiVie	*Foi et vie*
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GDTRP	*Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice*
GNTC	The Grace New Testament Commentary
GPIR	*Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HNT.E	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament. Ergänzungsband
HTKNT	Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
HvTSt	*Hervormde Teologiese Studies*
ICC	The International Critical Commentary
IJCM	*International Journal of Conflict Management*
Int	*Interpretation*
IRM	*International Review of Mission*
JAC.E	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum. Ergängzungsband

JAP	*Journal of Applied Psychology*
JASP	*Journal of Applied Social Psychology*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JCPS	Jewish and Christian Perspectives Series
JECH	*Journal of Early Christian History*
JECS	*Journal of Early Christian Studies*
JESP	*Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*
JETS	*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
JM	*Journal of Management*
JPsi	*Jurnal Psikologi*
JPSP	*Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*
JRT	*The Jouranl of Religious Thought*
JS	Johanneische Studien
JSJ	*Journal for the Study of Judaism*
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series
JSocPsy	*The Journal of Social Psychology*
JSP	*Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*
JTECL	Jewish Traditions in Early Christian Literature
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
JTSA	*Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*
LBSA	The Little, Brown Series in Anthropology
LEC	The Library of Early Christianity
LJRC	*Listening: Journal of Religion and Culture*
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
LSJ	H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, eds. *A Greek-English Lexicon*
LSTS	Library of Second Temple Studies
ManSci	*Management Science*
NCBC	New Cambridge Bible Commentary
Neot	*Neotestamentica*
NGS	New Gospel Studies
NICNT	The New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIDB	Katharine Doob Sakenfeld ed. *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 2006–2009)
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NovT	*Novum Testamentum*
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum: Supplement Series
NTIC	The New Testament in Context
NTL	New Testament Library
NTR	New Testament Readings
NTS	*New Testament Studies*

OBHDP	*Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*
ÖTK	Ökumenischer Taschenbuch-Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
PBR	*Psychonomic Bulletin and Review*
PETSE	Papers of the Estonian Theological Society in Exile
PFLUS	Publications de la Faculté des lettres de l'Université de Strasbourg
PHC	People's History of Christianity
PNTC	The Pillar New Testament Commentary
PRS	*Perspectives in Religious Studies*
PSPB	*Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*
PSPR	*Personality and Social Psychology Review*
PsyRev	*Psychological Review*
RB	*Revue Biblique*
RevExp	*Review and Expositor*
RivB	*Rivista biblica*
RNT	Regensburger Neues Testament
ROB	*Research in Organizational Behavior*
SA	*Scientific American*
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	SBL Dissertation Series
SBLSP	*SBL Seminar Papers*
SC	Sources chrétiennes
SCJ	Studies in Christianity and Judaism
SI	*Sociological Inquiry*
SKKNT	Stuttgarter kleiner Kommentar. Neues Testament
SNTSMS	Society for the New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SNTW	Studies of the New Testament and Its World
SPPC	*Social and Personality Psychology Compass*
SPS	Sacra Pagina Series
SRHEC	Studies in the Religion and History of Early Christianity
SS	*Studies in Spirituality*
SSEJC	Studies in Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity
ST	*Studia Theologica*
STAR	Studies in Theology and Religion
StBibLit	Studies in Biblical Literature
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
StPatr	*Studia patristica*
SUC	Schriften des Urchristentums
SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha
TBC	Torch Bible Commentaries
TDNT	G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.; London: Eerdmans, 1964–76).

TestImp	*Testamentum Imperium*
THKNT	Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
ThPsy	*Theory & Psychology*
TLT	Two Liturgical Traditions
TMSJ	*The Master's Seminary Journal*
TNTC	The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries
TSR	Texts and Studies in Religion
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur
TynBul	*Tyndale Bulletin*
TZ	*Theologische Zeitschrift*
UUÅ	Uppsala universitets årsskrift
VC	*Vigiliae Christianae*
VCSup	Vigiliae Christianae: Supplement Series
VE	*Verbum et Ecclesia*
VF	*Verkündigung und Forschung*
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WTJ	*The Westminster Theological Journal*
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZKG	*Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche*
ZTK	*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*

Bible Versions and Translations

ESV	English Standard Version
KJV	The King James Version
LXX	The Septuagint
MT	Masoretic text
NA^{28}	Nestle-Aland, 28th edition
NAB	The New American Bible
NASB	The New American Standard Bible
NET	New English Translation
NIV	New International Version
NJB	The New Jerusalem Bible
NKJ	New King James Version
NLT	New Living Translation
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NT	The New Testament
OT	The Old Testament
REB	Revised English Bible
RSV	Revised Standard Version
TEV	Today's English Version

Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1 Aim of Study

The aim of this study is to analyze James and the *Didache* from the perspective of group maintenance strategies.[1] By investigating the community tensions reflected in the two writings and the strategies they used to deal with these tensions, this study seeks to shed light on their purposes, the function they would have played for the early communities of Christ-followers, and the inner coherence of James and the *Didache* as whole documents.

For a long time, the studies of James have been overshadowed by Martin Luther's (in)famous comment that regards the book as "an epistle of straw."[2] Besides its seemingly contradiction to Paul's teaching, in modern critical studies it is often regarded as a random collection of sayings and ideas, devoid of structure, continuity in thought and coherent theology. One representative commentator holding such a view is Martin Dibelius, who in his commentary asserts that James should be viewed as "a storehouse from which [the audience] could draw whatever he needed."[3] Hence, it would be pointless to talk about the social situation and purpose of the book as a whole. In an article published in 2011, Varner observes that "[w]hile there were others who voiced exception to the views of the two Martins, their pervasive influence has certainly dominated the discussion for far too long!"[4]

For the *Didache*, many studies have been done on the composition history and redaction layers of the document, as well as its relation to the Gospel of

[1] Many aspects of how groups maintain their social identity and cohesiveness have been explored in social scientific studies of group dynamics. Various theories, each with its own merit and limitations, have been proposed to explain group phenomena in situations of challenge and tension. Targets of study range from international conflict to small group dynamics in daily life. In this study, results from several social-scientific theories about groups in conflict will be used. See below section 1.3.1 for an introduction to these theories.

[2] This comment is found in Luther's 1522 preface to the New Testament.

[3] Martin Dibelius, *James: A Commentary on the Epistle of James*, ed. Heinrich Greeven, trans. Michael A. Williams, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 11. See also G.C. Martin, "The Epistle of James as a Storehouse of the Sayings of Jesus," *Expositor* 7.3 (1907): 174–84, in which Martin claims that James, like the Sermon on the Mount, lacks explicit logical scheme of composition.

[4] William C. Varner, "The Main Theme and Structure of James," *TMSJ* 22 (2011): 115.

Matthew.[5] Attempts have been made to reconstruct the development of the community that produced the *Didache*, especially its relation to other Jewish communities.[6] However, little has been done to explore the ingroup tensions among the early church communities reflected in the *Didache*. It is sometimes assumed that later redactors of the document combined and modified their sources with little regard to the original meaning of the sources. Thus, the *Didache* is perceived as consisting of traces of inconsistence and contradictory ideas. Different parts of the document may have their own purposes and functions at different times and situations, but the document as a whole seems to lack coherence.

However, the tide has begun to change. In recent decades, research has been conducted that investigates the coherence of these two writings, as well as the relation of these writings to the social situations of the early church.[7] Yet there is still little done to explore the relation of these two writings to intra-communal relations of the early church. Hence, this study would try to contribute to this area by examining the ingroup conflicts reflected in James and the *Didache*, and how these writings could have functioned towards resolving these conflicts.

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[5] A substantiate discussion on the redaction layers of the *Didache* is first done by Audet. See Jean-Paul Audet, *La Didache: Instructions des Apotres* (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1958), 104–20. Following Audet's lead, works by Rordorf and Tuiler, Mattioli, Niederwimmer, and Garrow also offer much effort for reconstructing the redaction layers of the *Didache*. See Rordorf, Willy and André Tuilier. *La Doctrine des douze apôtres (Didachè)*, SC 248 (Paris: Cerf, 1978), 91–99, Umberto Mattioli, *Didachè: Dottrina dei dodici apostoli: Introduzione, traduzione e note* (Rome: Edizioni Paoline, 1980), 14–23, Kurt Niederwimmer, *The Didache: A Commentary*, trans. Linda M. Maloney, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998), Alan J.P. Garrow, *The Gospel of Matthew's Dependence on the* Didache, JSNTSup 254 (London: T&T Clark, 2004). On the other hand, a debate on the relation between the *Didache* and the Gospel of Matthew was first triggered by Köster's suggestion that the *Didache* did not use Matthew as a source even though the Didachist might have knowledge of this written gospel. See Helmut Köster, *Synoptische Überlieferung bei den apostolischen Vätern*, TU 65 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1957), 159–241. Works contributing to this debate include Richard Glover, "The Didache's Quotations and the Synoptic Gospels." *NTS* 5 (1958): 12–29, Rordorf, Willy and André Tuilier, "Le problème de la transmission textuelle de Didachè 1.3b–2.1," in *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen*, ed. Franz Paschke, TU 125 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1981), 499–513, Jonathan A. Draper, "The Jesus Tradition in the Didache," in *Gospel Perspectives V: The Jesus Tradition Outside the Gospels*, ed. D. Wenham (Sheffield: JSOT, 1985), 269–89, Clayton N. Jefford, *The Sayings of Jesus in the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, VCSup 11 (Leiden: Brill, 1989) and Garrow, *Matthew's Dependence*.

[6] Some recent works on this area include Clayton N. Jefford, "Locating the Didache," *Forum* 3.1 (2014): 39–68 and Pardee, Nancy. "Visualizing the Christian Community at Antioch: The Window of the *Didache*." *Forum* 3.1 (2014): 69–90. For more reviews on discussions in this area, see below section 2.2.

[7] For a review of these researches, see below chapter 2.

It must be stressed that this study is not aimed at offering a comprehensive portrayal of the addressees of James and the *Didache*. Indeed, both writings were likely to be addressed to a broad audience consisting of various local communities. The situations of these local communities would differ from one another. Hence, it would be improbable, if not impossible, to reconstruct a detailed depiction. However, it is still possible that the documents did respond to actual problems among their audiences, especially since conflict is integral to almost all human experiences. Hence it is plausible that individual passages in James and the *Didache*, as well as the documents as a whole, have concrete community tensions in view. It is the aim of this study to argue that this is indeed the case. Moreover, it would be suggested that the concerns for conflict resolution and group solidarity can provide an interpretative frame for both James and the *Didache*.

1.2 Choice of Texts

Scholars have argued that the Gospel of Matthew, the letter of James, and the *Didache* are three related documents.[8] This study chooses to compare James and the *Didache* from the perspective of group maintenance. The reason is two-fold. First, there are many comparisons between Matthew and James on the one hand, and between Matthew and the *Didache* on the other.[9] However, there are few, if any, attempts to make direct comparisons between James and the *Didache*. This is understandable since the textual relations between these two writings are far from obvious. However, as will be shown in this study, such a direct comparison is not only possible, but may also provide new insights for interpreting both documents. Second, there is the consideration of genre. James is a letter,[10] while the *Didache* is a

[8] Huub van de Sandt and Jürden K. Zangenberg, Introduction to *Matthew, James, and Didache: Three Related Dcouments in Their Jewish and Christian Settings* (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 1–2. See also John S. Kloppenborg, "*Didache* 1.1–6.1, James, Matthew and the Torah," in *Trajectories through the New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers*, eds. Andrew Gregory and Christopher Tuckett (Oxford: OUP, 2005), 193–221.

[9] Discussions on the relation between Matthew and James can be found in many commentaries of James, and a more detailed discussion between James and the Gospel traditions can be found in Patrick J. Hartin, *James and the Q Sayings of Jesus*, JSNTSup 47 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1991). On the other hand, an international conference on the studies of Matthew and the *Didache* was held in 2013. The papers of the conference is published in Huub van de Sandt ed. *Matthew and the Didache: Two Documents from the Same Jewish-Christian Milieu?* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005).

[10] Although the epistolary nature of James is contested, it will be argued in the following study that James should be regarded as a letter, both in form and function.

collection of instructions in the form resembling a church order. Both documents give more direct instructions on Christian community life, as compared to Matthew, which is a Gospel aimed primarily at introducing Jesus. This is not to deny that Matthew also reflects situations of the early church communities. However, ingroup conflict does not seem to be a dominant concern of Matthew. Therefore, while the relevant passages in Matthew with respect to ingroup conflict, such as Matt 18, are not to be ignored, they will only be mentioned in passing when the discussion necessitates it. The focus of this study will remain on James and the *Didache*.

The authorship and date of both James and the *Didache* are debated. Some commentators maintain that the letter of James is written by James the Just, Jesus' brother and leader of the Jerusalem church. This implies that the letter was written before James' martyrdom in the 60s of the first century.[11] Some commentators even date James as early as the 40s.[12] Others regard the letter as a pseudepigraphon written in the late first century or the first half of the second century,[13] even as late as the middle of the second century.[14] The debate is ongoing and there seems to be no sign of consensus. However, for the aim of this study, which adopts a synchronic

[11] Josephus attested James' martyrdom in 62 A.D. in *Ant.* 20.197–203 and *J.W.* 4.314–25. For a brief account of James' martyrdom, see Paul W. Barnett, *Jesus and the Rise of Early Christianity* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1999), 322–23.

[12] Richard J. Knowling, *The Epistle of St James*, Westminster Commentaries (London: Methuen, 1904), xxiv–lxiv, Gerhard Kittel, "Der geschichtliche Ort des Jakobusbriefes," *ZNW* 41 (1942): 71–105, Gerhard Kittel, "Der Jakobusbrief und die apostolischen Väter," *ZNW* 43 (1950): 54–112, John A.T. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament* (London: SCMP, 1976), 118–39, Douglas J. Moo, *The Letter of James*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 25–27, Rainer Riesner, "James," in *The Oxford Bible Commentary*, eds. John Barton and John Muddiman (Oxford: OUP, 2001), 1256, William C. Varner, *The Book of James: A New Perspective: A Linguistic Commentary Applying Discourse Analysis* (Woodlands: Kress Biblical Resources, 2010), 199–205.

[13] James H. Ropes, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of James*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1916), 43–52, Dibelius, *James*, 11–21, Jacques Marty, *L'épître de Jacques* (Paris: F. Alcan, 1935), xviii–xx, Franklin W. Young, "The Relation of 1 Clement to the Epistle of James," *JBL* 67 (1948): 339–45, Bo Reicke, *The Epistle of James, Peter, and Jude*, AB 37 (New York: Doubleday, 1964), xv, Werner G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (London: SCMP, 1975), 289–91, Christoph Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, HNT 15/1 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 3–6, Dean Deppe, *The Sayings of Jesus in the Epistle of James* (Chelsea: Bookcrafters, 1989), 215–16, Wiard Popkes, "The Mission of James in His Time," in *The Brother of Jesus: James the Just and His Mission*, eds. Bruce Chilton and Jacob Neusner (Louisville, Ky.; London: WJKP, 2001), 92, Dale C. Allison, Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on James*, ICC (New York; London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 3–32.

[14] See David R. Nienhuis, *Not by Paul Alone: The Formation of the Catholic Epistle Collection and the Christian Canon* (Waco: Baylor University, 2007), 99–231 and David R. Nienhuis, "The Letter of James as a Canon-Conscious Pseudepigraph," in *The Catholic Epistles and Apostolic Tradition*, eds. Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr and Robert W. Wall (Waco: Baylor University, 2009), 183–200.

approach, a precise dating of the letter is not crucial. As long as James is a product of the early church roughly of the same period as the *Didache*, a comparative study of these two documents would be possible.

The debate on the *Didache* is no less complicated. Indeed, to talk about the date of the *Didache* is itself a complicated matter, since it is likely that the document has undergone a process of evolution in which traditional materials were accumulated and modified.[15] Hence, while some of the traditional materials date very early, when the final form of the *Didache* was produced is more difficult to determine. From the very beginning of *Didache* study, a variety of views of the date of the document were proposed. Some date the document to as early as the mid-first century, while others opt for a much later dating.[16] In recent decades, a majority of views tend towards dating the *Didache* to around the turn of the first century.[17]

Regardless the precise dating of these two documents, they can still be considered roughly as witnesses of the early church. It is true that the situation of the church changed to certain extent in the first two centuries. However, the church was still surrounded by the dominant culture of the Greco-Roman society. Moreover, some studies on group dynamics which have general applicability across time and culture, as the following section is going to introduce, would still be applicable to the

[15] Such a view was first forcefully proposed by Audet in Audet, *Didache*, 166–86. It has been the consensus of most *Didache* scholars since then, although scholars differ in their reconstruction of redaction layers of the *Didache*.

[16] Audet is a key figure among those who date the *Didache* in the mid-first century. See Audet, *Didache*, 187–210. On the other hand, one example of late dating is found in J.A. Robinson, who regards the *Didache* as a third century document. See J. Armitage Robinson, *Barnabas, Hermas and the Didache: Being the Donnellan Lectures Delivered before the University of Dublin in 1920* (London: SPCK, 1920), 82. For a summary of scholars' views on the dating of the *Didache*, see Jefford, *Sayings of Jesus*, 3–17 and Jonathan A. Draper, "The *Didache* in Modern Research: An Overview," in *The Didache in Modern Research*, ed. J.A. Draper, AGJU 37 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 4–16.

[17] So Adolf Adam, "Erwägungen zur Herkunft der Didache," *ZKG* 68 (1957): 70, Klaus Wengst, *Didache (Apostellehre), Barnabasbrief, Zweiter Klemensbrief, Schrift an Diognet*, SUC 2 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2006), 62–63, Rordorf and Tuilier, *La Doctrine*, 91–99, Kurt Niederwimmer, *The Didache: A Commentary*, trans. Linda M. Maloney, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998), 52–53. One evidence that supports dating the *Didache* no later than the mid-second century is the belief that prophecy, which is a main concern in *Did* 11–13, was eliminated or at least marginalized from the main Christian communities. See Philip S. Alexander, "Rabbinic and Patristic Bible Exegesis as Intertexts: Towards a Theory of Comparative Midrash," in *The Temple in Text and Tradition: A Festschrift in Honour of Robert Hayward*, ed. R. Timothy McLay, LSTS 83 (London: Bloombury, 2015), 79.

early communities of believers in this period. Therefore, even though James and the *Didache* may not be strictly contemporary, a synchronic comparison of the group maintenance strategy of these two documents could still be made to illuminate the inner situation of early Christian communities.

1.3 Methodology

To investigate the conflict situations reflected in James and the *Didache* as well as the writings' strategies of group maintenance, this study will combine a careful examination of the inner-texture of the texts with insights from social-scientific studies. These social-scientific theories could provide insights for group dynamics under conflict situations, and hence offer subsidiary information for analyzing the situations of the audience, as well as the functions the two writings might have in response to these situations.

1.3.1 Social-Scientific Criticism

Systematic applications of social-scientific theories to biblical exegesis emerged from the 1970's.[18] Although considered useful and promising by some biblical scholars, the social-scientific method is not without its own potential pitfalls.[19] One concern is that exegetes using this method may reduce everything, including theological beliefs, into social phenomena, even to the extent of excluding "the God hypothesis". Another concern is the adequacy of the models employed to gather and analyze the social phenomena.[20] In response to the first objection, it must be stressed that social-scientific criticism focuses on the social conditions, capacities, and consequences of beliefs, rather than imposing judgments on these beliefs. Hence "[t]here is nothing inherent in the method itself that makes it 'reductionistic'."[21] In response to the second objection, it must be admitted that it is a valid concern, but it

[18] There are two main directions of applying social-science studies for the researches of the New Testament. One focuses on the social history and social description of the New Testament world, while the other asks cultural anthropology and sociology questions for the New Testament. However, the two approaches are complementary to each other. See the discussion in Andrew D. Clarke and J. Brian Tucker, "Social History and Social Theory in the Study of Social Identity," in *T&T Clark Handbook to Social Identity in the New Testament*, eds. J. Brian Tucker and Coleman A. Baker (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 41–58.
[19] Elliott, *Social-Scientific Criticism*, 87–100.
[20] Ibid., 93, 97.
[21] Ibid., 89. See also the comment in Robin Scroggs, "Sociology and the New Testament," *LJRC* 21 (1986): 140.

does not rule out the possibility of applying sociological models to biblical studies. Rather, it means that models must be applied critically, with particular sensitivity to the dangers of anachronism and ethnocentrism.[22] Moreover, models must be flexible and must be reviewed continuously for their appropriateness. Even though social-scientific models have their limitations in reconstructing historical details of backgrounds of New Testament books, when applied appropriately, they can help the modern reader hear the meaning of biblical texts in their original social and cultural settings. In particular, sociological theories can provide insight on how groups react in social interactions, thus providing framework for looking into the social dynamics in the early church communities.

Social-scientific studies of the New Testament involve a variety of topics related to social settings and social behaviour of the early Christians.[23] One area of interest is how groups of believers form their social identity and maintain the cohesiveness of the community. In the following, some relevant social-scientific theories will be introduced. These include theories on social identity, relations between intragroup process and intergroup behaviours, and studies in conflicts.

1.3.1.1 Social Identity Theories

The basic concept of social identity is that individuals define themselves in relation to a larger social group and are defined by others as members of a group.[24] In a classical study of the sociology of knowledge, it is suggested that the fundamental problem in any intergroup setting is that of defining one's social identity, of placing oneself in relation to others.[25] This implies that people's behaviour is affected and shaped by the groups to which they belong. Social identity is important because people rely on a strong sense of social identity to reduce feelings of uncertainty.[26]

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[22] Elliott, *Social-Scientific Criticism*, 97.
[23] For a list of related topics, see Elliott, *Social-Scientific Criticism*, 110–23.
[24] Henri Tajfel and John C. Turner, "The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior," in *Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, eds. Stephen Worchel and William G. Austin (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1986), 15.
[25] Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1967), 33–61.
[26] Michael A. Hogg, "Human Groups, Social Categories, and Collective Self: Social Identity and the Management of Self-Uncertainty," in *Handbook of the Uncertain Self*, eds. R. Arkin et. al. (New York: Psychology Press, 2010), 401–20.

Experimental results have shown that social identity can function merely in terms of the sense of belonging to a group, independent of similarities between individual group members.[27] However, in real life situations, members belonging to a group usually have some natural bonding so that the common social identity can be maintained and strengthened. In particular, members of a group are usually joined by similar group norms, values, goals and ideologies. These similarities in beliefs reflect much deeper "construct similarities", that is, similar ideas of the world.[28] The construction of social identity consists of three basic aspects: cognitive recognition of belonging, connotations of the value attached, and emotional dimensions.[29] Here two factors that contribute to the instantiation and maintenance of social identity will be noted. The first is the generation and inculcation of group norms.[30] Group norms define acceptable and unacceptable attitudes and behaviours by members of the group, thus bringing order and predictability to the environment.[31] On the other hand, by conforming to group norms, individual members show fidelity to the group. It may then enhance their position in the group, thus strengthening group belonging.[32] The second factor is the "interdependence of fate", which creates a sense of "groupness" for the members and leads to differentiation between different groups.[33] This is also related to the temporal aspect of social identity. Social life is a temporal trajectory involving past, present and future dimensions, thus meaningful "stories" at both the individual and group levels provide content for the social identity of group members.[34] In particular, personal and social identities are shaped by social

[27] Michael Billig and Henri Tajfel, "Social Categorization and Similarity in Intergroup Behaviour," *EJSP* 3/1 (1973): 27–52.
[28] Michael A. Hogg and Dominic Abrams, *Social Identifications: A Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Processes*, (London; New York: Routledge, 1988), 111.
[29] Philip Esler, "An Outline of Social Identity Theory," in *T&T Clark Handbook to Social Identity in the New Testament*, eds. J. Brian Tucker and Coleman A. Baker (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 17. See also, John C. Turner, "Some Current Issues in Research on Social Identity and Self-Categorization Theories," in *Social Identity: Context, Commitment, Content*, eds. Naomi Ellemers, Rusell Spears and Bertjan Doosje (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 8.
[30] Rupert Brown, *Group Processes: Dynamics within and between Groups* (New York: Basil Blakwell, 1988), 42–48.
[31] Philip Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans: The Social Setting of Paul's Letter* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 20.
[32] Wolfgang Steinel et. al., "How Intragroup Dynamics Affect Behavior in Intergroup Conflict: The Role of Group Norms, Prototypicality, and Need to Belong," *GPIR* 13/6 (2010): 781–82.
[33] Henri Tajfel et. al., "Social Categorization and the Intergroup Behaviour," *EJSP* 1/2 (1971): 152–53.
[34] Marco Cinnirella, "Exploring Temporal Aspects of Social Identity: The Concept of Possible Social Identities," *EJSP* 28 (1998): 227–48, Matthew J. Marohl, "Letter Writing and Social Identity," in *T&T Clark Handbook to Social Identity in the New Testament*, eds. J. Brian Tucker and Coleman A. Baker

memories that are enacted in "distinct sets of mnemonic practices in various social rites."[35] These observations can shed light on how the use of traditions may contribute to the establishment and maintenance of social identity.

The phenomenon of people defining themselves and the others in terms of social identities leads to social categorization, which means the stereotyping of people in group-prototypical ways according to the groups they belong. Social categorization usually leads to ingroup bias, that is, people tend to have higher esteem and react more favorably to ingroup members.[36] Moreover, people are more open to influence or persuasion by members of the same social category.[37] These social-psychological phenomena affect intergroup behaviour and can lead to intergroup conflict. On the other hand, they also affect intragroup relations and dynamics.[38] Hence, social categorization theories can be applied to analyze the persuasive strategy of a text. This study is going to investigate how these social phenomena may be reflected in the rhetoric strategies in James and the *Didache*.

Another significant theory related to social identity is the self-categorization theory.[39] It explores the motivation and the dynamic of an individual in the process of identifying with a social identity. Self-categorization theory sees a continuum between individual identity and group identity, with either one being more salient in

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(London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 93–104. See also Susan Condor, "Social Identity and Time," in *Social Groups and Identities: Developing the Legacy of Henri Tajfel*, ed. Peter Robinson (Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann, 1996), 285–316, in which Condor develops the temporal aspects of Tajfel's theory.

[35] Jeffrey K. Olick and Joyce Robbins, "Social Memory Studies: From 'Collective Memory' to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practice," *ARS* 24 (1998): 112. For more discussions on the mechanism of how commemorations interact with contemporary circumstances, see also Jeffrey K. Olick, "Genre Memories and Memory Genres: A Dialogical Analysis of May 8, 1945 Commemorations in the Federal Republic of Germany," *ASR* 64 (1999): 381–402, and Coleman A. Baker, "A Narrative-Identity Model for Biblical Interpretation: The Role of Memory and Narrative in Social Identity Formation," in *T&T Clark Handbook to Social Identity in the New Testament*, eds. J. Brian Tucker and Coleman A. Baker (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 105–18.

[36] John F. Dovidio, "Bridging Intragroup Processes and Intergroup Relations: Needing the Twain to Meet," *BJSP* 52 (2013): 3. See also Sabine Otten and Gordon B. Moskowitz, "Evidence for Implicit Evaluative In-Group Bias: Affect-Based Spontaneous Trait Inference in a Minimal Group Paradigm," *JESP* 36 (2000): 77–89 and Miles Hewstone, "The 'Ultimate Attribution Error'? A Review of the Literature on Intergroup Causal Attribution," *EJSP* 20 (1990): 311–35.

[37] John C. Turner et. al., *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 154. See also Esler, *Conflict and Identity*, 27 and S. Alexander Haslam et. al., "The Group as the Basis for Emergent Stereotype Consensus," *ERSP* 8 (1998): 203–39.

[38] Hogg and Abrams, *Social Identifications*, 106–12.

[39] For a detailed description of the theory, see Turner et. al., *Rediscovering the Social Group*, 42–67.

different situations. Because the self is typically evaluated positively, one's self-categorization as a member of a certain group should imply that, as a default, one will positively evaluate that group.[40] Thus when the social identity is more salient, for example when the group encounters external threat,[41] people will act in a more pro-social way and conform more to the group norms and stereotypes.[42] On the contrary, negative ingroup experiences such as witnessing an inconsistency between attitudes and behaviour of another ingroup member would produce dissonance which may in turn reduce the sense of belonging.[43] The self-categorization theory postulates a fairly mobile sense of self, sensitive to varying social situations including relations with other groups and dynamics between ingroup members.[44] It thus helps to explore and describe more clearly people's reactions within a group, especially in situations of conflict. Moreover, it opens the way to study in more depth the relation between intergroup behaviours and intragroup processes. The following section now turns to a brief discussion of this relation.

1.3.1.2 Intergroup Relations and Intragroup Processes

It has been observed in the previous section that group members' cohesiveness varies according to social situations. When a group contributes to an individual's positive self-image, group cohesiveness is strengthened. This is achieved by positive distinctiveness with respect to other groups. If a group cannot provide such positive distinctiveness, internal conflict would arise.[45] Therefore, if a group encounters challenges from other groups that place the group in a negative light, the

[40] Samuel L. Gaertner et. al., "The Common Ingroup Identity Model: Recategorization and the Reduction of Intergroup Bias," *ERSP* 4 (1993): 1–26.
[41] For a discussion on the relation between external threat and social identification, see Lewis Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict* (London : Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956), 87–104, Morton Deutsch, *The Resolution of Conflict: Constructive and Destructive Processes* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 124–42, 215–81, and Dovidio, "Bridging," 6.
[42] Turner et. al., *Rediscovering the Social Group*, 56–66. See also John F. Dovidio and William N. Morris, "Effects of Stress and Commonality of Fate on Helping Behavior," *JPSP* 31 (1975): 145–149, S. Alexander Haslam and Michael J. Platow, "Your Wish Is Our Command: The Role of Shared Social Identity in Translating a Leader's Vision into Followers' Action," in *Social Identity Processes in Organizations*, eds. Michael A. Hogg and D. J. Terry (New York: Psychology Press, 2001), 217 and S. Alexander Haslem, *Psychology in Organizations: The Social Identity Approach* (London: SAGE, 2001), 98–109.
[43] Michael I. Norton et. al., "Vicarious Dissonance: Attitude Change from the Inconsistency of Others," *JPSP* 85 (2003): 47–62. See also Demis E. Glasford et. al., "Intragroup Dissonance: Responses to Ingroup Violation of Personal Values," *JESP* 44 (2008): 1057–58.
[44] Esler, *Conflict and Identity*, 26.
[45] Billig and Tajfel, "Social Categorization and Similarity," 49.

social identity of the group members would be jeopardized and the cohesiveness of the group will be weakened.[46] On the other hand, external threats can also increase people's sense of social identity and its distinctive qualities and symbols, as noted above. Hence, if an outgroup challenge can be cast in a light that strengthens the need for ingroup members to defend their common identity, it would contributes to the cohesiveness of the group. Otherwise it would weaken the social identification of group members.[47] Therefore, in order to maintain the cohesiveness of the group, groups must respond to outgroup challenges in a way that enhances its positive distinctiveness.

There can be various ways to promote positive distinctiveness for the ingroup in face of outgroup challenges. One can compare the ingroup to the outgroup on new aspects, change the values assigned to the attributes of the group so that comparisons which were previously negative become positive, or change the outgroup with which the ingroup is compared.[48] Such "social creativity" changes the group's perceived relation with outgroups as well as the perception of ingroup prototypes.[49] In situations of challenges, leaders have to focus on "creating, coordinating, and controlling a social self-categorical relationship that defines what leader and follower have in common and that makes them 'special'," so that the positive distinctiveness of the group can be restored.[50]

The dynamic between intergroup relations and intragroup processes also has implications for ingroup dissonance reduction strategies. When challenges come from the ingroup, that is, when dissonance and conflict occur within a group, people can choose different ways to reduce the dissonance.[51] For example, one can seek to change group members' actions in order to restore harmony within the group.[52] However, in view of social identity theories, ingroup dissonance may also be reduced

[46] John H. Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless: A Sociological Exegesis of 1 Peter, Its Situation and Strategy* (London: SCMP, 1982), 105.
[47] Tajfel and Turner, "Social Identity Theory," 19.
[48] Ibid., 20.
[49] Dovidio, "Bridging," 4.
[50] Haslem and Platow, "Your Wish," 218.
[51] Leon Festinger, *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (Evanston, Ill.: Row, Peterson, 1957), 177–202.
[52] Glasford et. al., "Intragroup Dissonance," 1060–63.

through strategies involving intergroup relations, such as outgroup derogation[53] and ingroup affirmation that reestablish positive distinctiveness.[54] Experimental results show that strategies involving relationship with outgroups are usually more effective than those only focusing on the ingroup.[55] These observations would offer insights on the group maintenance strategies in James and the *Didache*.

As a last remark on intergroup relations and intragroup processes, it will be noted that in real life situations, these two are not completely distinguishable and the difference may even be artificial.[56] For a group with considerable size, subgroups would naturally arise, and hence intergroup dynamics would exist *within* the group. This would become obvious in situations of intragroup conflicts. On the other hand, different groups may be subsumed under a broader category into one large group. This provides a direction for resolving divisions that threaten to damage the integrity of a group. Hence, both intergroup interactions and intragroup dynamics should be taken into account when accessing group maintenance strategies.[57]

1.3.1.3 Conflict Theories

Recent decades witness an increasing interest in social-scientific studies of conflict. Efforts are made to understand the causes, development, and resolution strategies of conflicts, ranging from interpersonal to international levels. It is widely accepted that conflict is an integral part of human experiences, and some kinds of

[53] Myron Rothbart and Scott Lewis, "Cognitive Processes and Intergroup Relations: A Historical Perspective," in *Social Cognition: Impact on Social Psychology*, eds. Patricia G. Devine et. al. (San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 1994), 347–82.

[54] Glasford et. al. "I Continue to Feel So Good About Us: In-Group Identification and the Use of Social Identity-Enhancing Strategies to Reduce Intragroup Dissonance," *PSPB* 35 (2009): 415–27 shows further that such strategies are more effective for members of high level of group identification.

[55] See for example Ulrich Wagner and Philip L. Ward, "Variation of Outgroup Presence and Evaluation of the Ingroup," *BJSP* 32 (1993): 241–251, and Sandro Costarelli and Rose M. Callà, "Cross-Dimension-Ambivalent In-Group Stereotypes: The Moderating Roles of Social Context of Stereotype Endorsement and In-Group Identification," *JSocPsy* 147/5 (2007): 543–54.

[56] Dovidio, "Bridging," 13. See also Jim Sidanius and Felicia Pratto, *Social Dominance: An Intergroup Theory of Social Hierarchy and Oppression* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 3–57.

[57] Theories of intergroup and intragroup relations have been widely applied by modern social-scientists to explain conflict phenomena. Some studies in this aspect can be found in Henri Tajfel, *Human Groups and Social Categories: Studies in Social Psychology* (Cambridge: University Press, 1981), Peter Glick, "Choice of Scapegoats," in *On the Nature of Prejudice: Fifty Years after Allport*, eds. J.F. Dovidio et. al. (Malden: Blackwell, 2005), 244–61, John T. Jost and Orsolya Hunyady, "The Psychology of System Justification and the Palliative Function of Ideology," *ERSP* 13 (2002): 111–53, and Sidanius and Pratto, *Social Dominance*. These real-life studies illustrate that intergroup and intragroup phenomena are useful for explaining group dynamics, especially in situations of conflict.

conflict can be constructive for the parties involved.[58] However, sometimes conflict escalates to such an extent to become destructive.

A. Definition and Causes of Conflict

A simple definition of conflict is the "perceived divergence of interest, a belief that the parties' current aspirations are incompatible."[59] The most common causes of conflict include scarcity of resources, ambiguity about relative power, lack of normative consensus, and goal incompatibility.[60] Conflict can occur between individuals, between different groups, or within a group. In the latter case, subgroups may be formed within the group. It should be noted that conflict between individuals can also escalate to a collective problem at the group level, especially in cases of high group interdependence. It happens through emotional contagion, that is, an individual's expression of emotion perceived and shared by other members.[61] This escalation process would be more likely to happen if the individuals in conflict have high influence on other group members, such as in the case of conflict among group leaders.

B. Conflict Models

Allport points out that there are four essential constituents for successful intergroup conflict reduction:

1. equal status within the contact situation;
2. intergroup cooperation;
3. common goals; and
4. support of authorities, law, or custom.[62]

His observation is strongly supported by Pettigrew,[63] and is often referred to as the Allport-Pettigrew hypothesis, or the contact hypothesis.[64] Through several decades'

[58] Joseph P. Folger et. al., *Working through Conflict: Strategies for Relationships, Groups, and Organizations*, 7th ed. (Boston; London: Pearson, 2013), 8–9.
[59] Dean G. Pruitt and Sung Hee Kim, *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate, and Settlement*, 3rd ed. (Boston; London: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 7–8.
[60] Ibid., 21–27.
[61] M. Audrey Korsgaard et. al., "A Multilevel View of Intragroup Conflict," *JM* 34 (2008): 1241.
[62] Gordon W. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (Cambridge; Boston: Addison-Wesley, 1954), 281.
[63] See for example Thomas F. Pettigrew, *Racially Separate or Together?* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971).
[64] For a summary of studies subsequent to Allport, see Christopher B. Smith, "Back and to the Future:

development, critique, and supplement, Allport's hypothesis has become a widely acknowledged "theory" in intergroup relations.[65] It offers important insights for the conditions that facilitate conflict resolution.[66] In the following study, the rhetoric of James and the *Didache* will be analyzed to see whether they could enhance these factors of conflict resolution.

Another important factor affecting the reactions of parties in conflict is their beliefs about conflict, which is a type of social knowledge shaped largely by culture.[67] According to different beliefs and behaviours in conflict, Kazan identifies three types of conflict models.[68] The first is the harmony model, which emphasizes maintaining smooth relationships and avoid open expression of conflict. This tends to emerge in associative cultures, where community solidarity is placed above individual interests. The second is the confrontational model, which emphasizes the aggressive pursuit of individual goals and pay less attention on relationship or group preservation. This tends to emerge in cultures where equal distribution of power among people is stressed. The third is the regulative model, which emphasizes setting conflict through application of principles, codes, rules, and laws. This tends to emerge in cultures that accept difference in power and respect authorities. In the cultural background of the early church, one would expect a combination of the harmony model and the regulative model to be operative in situations of conflict.

The Intergroup Contact Hypothesis Revisited," *SI* 64 (1994): 438–39.

[65] For a review of the development of Allport's hypothesis, see Miles Hewstone and Hermann Swart, "Fifty-Odd Years of Inter-Group Contact: From Hypothesis to Integrated Theory," *BJSP* 50 (2011): 374–86.

[66] Zuma stresses that the contact theory is primarily a theory about prejudice instead of intergroup relations. However, the contact theory is widely appealed to in studies about reduction of intergroup conflicts. See Buhle Zuma, "Contact Theory and the Concept of Prejudice: Metaphysical and Moral Explorations and an Epistemological Question," *ThPsy* 24 (2014): 40–42. More examples of application of Allport's hypothesis to studies of real-life situations can be found in Smith, "Back and to the Future," 438–55 and Robyn K. Mallett et.al., "Seeing through Their Eyes: When Majority Group Members Take Collective Action on Behalf of an Outgroup," *GPIR* 11 (2008): 451–70. These studies show that contact theory is useful in analyzing group phenomena in conflict resolution in various daily life situations by specifying the essential constituents for conflict reduction through contact.

[67] Folger et. al., *Working through Conflict*, 53–70.

[68] M. Kamil Kazan, "Culture and Conflict Management: A Theoretical Framework," *IJCM* 8 (1997): 338–60. Rahim proposes a similar three-type model. See M. Afzalur Rahim, "A Measure of Styles of Handling Interpersonal Conflict," *AMJ* 26 (1983): 368–76.

Recently, some scholars introduce the concept of dynamical systems to the studies of conflict.[69] This approach tries to take into account the complexity of the social psychology of groups in conflict. One of the core observations of this approach is that groups tend to move toward a set of conditions, called "attractors". These attractors are stable statuses that resist small changes in group conditions. Hence, to move a group away from such statuses, there must be a critical change in the group conditions. One implication of this observation for conflict resolution is that another "attractor" is needed for a group to change from a conflict situation. Alternate thoughts, worldviews and ideologies have to be supplied to replace the original ones that support the conflict.[70] Another implication is that effective conflict resolution should focus on the more fundamental elements comprising the conflict behaviors rather than the superficial manifestation of the conflict.[71] These observations could shed light on how James and the *Didache* deal with community conflict by highlighting the significance of the elements of worldview conveyed in these documents for the reduction of conflict within the community.

C. Conflict Resolution

The process of tackling conflict situations involves three aspects, which are related in sequential order. They are settlement, resolution, and reconciliation.[72] Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov observes that the last step, reconciliation, involves a change of some element in each party's identity that constitutes "the removal of the negation of the other as a central component of one's own identity."[73] It is also observed that the development of a transcendent identity becomes possible with reconciliation and, in turn, reinforces reconciliation, though a transcendent identity may not be a

[69] For an introduction for the use of dynamical systems in conflict theories, see Robin R. Vallacher et. al., "Dynamical Foundations of Intractable Conflict: Introduction to the Special Issue," *Peace and Conflict* 16 (2010): 113–25 and Robin R. Vallacher et. al., *Attracted to Conflict: Dynamic Foundations of Destructive Social Relations* (Berlin: Springer, 2013), 43–45.
[70] Vallacher et. al., "Dynamical Foundations," 118–19.
[71] Ibid., 119–20.
[72] Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov, *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation* (New York; Oxford: OUP, 2004), 114. In the following discussions, the term "conflict resolution" will be used in a broad sense including all three aspects.
[73] Ibid., 119. See also Terrell A. Northrup, "The Dynamic of Identity in Personal and Social Conflict," in *Intractable Conflicts and Their Transformation*, eds. Louis Kriesberg et. al. (Syracuse: University Press, 1989), 77–81.

necessary condition for reconciliation.[74] These observations about identities bring us back to social identity theories and their relevance in conflict situations.[75]

From a social identity perspective, conflict between groups or subgroups can be reduced by resolving the categories that distinguish between ingroup and outgroup so that the group boundary is weakened or even dissolved. There are three major approaches to achieve this, namely, recategorization,[76] decategorization,[77] and cross categorizations.[78] The one most relevant to this study is recategoriztion, which refers to the process of subsuming the members of the rival groups into a single superordinate category. This involves introducing a new transcendent category that overrides but not necessarily cancels out the original identity-defining categories that separate the groups.[79] In cases when the power between conflicting groups is unequal, emphasizing shared identity also serves to enhance feelings of status and power among members of low-status groups.[80] This further enhances conflict resolution.

One last aspect of conflict resolution theories to be noted is the involvement of a third-party. While the issue of third-party intervention is widely discussed in conflict theories,[81] here it suffices to note a few ways the third-party can function in conflict resolution processes. These include identifying the real issues at stake, stimulating disputant motivation to reach agreement, or using their own power to

[74] Bar-Siman-Tov, *From Conflict Resolution*, 119.
[75] For a brief summary of social identity approaches to conflict studies, see Vallacher et. al., *Attracted to Conflict*, 38–39.
[76] See Samuel L. Gaertner el. al., "Reducing Intergroup Bias: The Benefits of Recategorisation," *JPSP* 57 (1989): 239–49 and Samuel, L. Gaertner and John F. Dovidio, "Reducing Intergroup Bias: The Common Ingroup Identity Model," in *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology*, eds. P.A.M. van Lange, A. W. Kruglanski and E. T. Higgins (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2012), 2:439–57.
[77] Rupert Brown, "Tajfel's Contribution to the Reduction of Intergroup Conflict," in *Social Groups and Identities: Developing the Legacy of Henri Tajfel*, ed. Peter Robinson (Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann, 1996), 175–76.
[78] Jean-Claude Deschamps and Willem Doise, "Crossed Category Memberships in Intergroup Relations," in *Differentiation between Social Groups: Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, ed. Henri Tajfel (London: Academic Press, 1978), 141–58.
[79] Esler, *Conflict and Identity*, 30–33. Esler points out that the process of recategorization can be impeded if the participants are required to abandon their original group identities entirely. Hence, it may be more beneficial to maintain a dual identity consisting of a common superordinate identity and a distinct subgroup identity.
[80] Dovidio, "Bridging," 10.
[81] See for example Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 226–58, Folger et. al., *Working through Conflict*, 253–87, and William W. Wilmot and Joyce L. Hocker, *Interpersonal Conflict*, 7th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2007), 270–95.

impose an agreement.[82] Third-party intervention is relevant to the study of James and the *Didache* since in the rhetoric of these documents, both the (supposed) author and God may be viewed as a third-party intervening in (possible) conflict among the faith community.

1.3.1.4 Summary of Social Scientific Theories

The above discussion has introduced social-scientific approaches for New Testament studies, with an overview of some theories on social identity and their relevance to conflict resolution. It should be remarked that the social identity theories introduced above are widely applied in social-scientific studies. This means that these are general concepts with more or less universal applicability through time, location and culture. Indeed, in the cultures of ancient Israelite or Greco-Roman societies which were more associative than individualistic, one would expect the effect of social identity even more prominent.[83] Therefore it would be apt to analyze texts from the early church utilizing social identity theories.[84] However, it must be noted that like most social-scientific theories, the theories introduced above are mainly descriptive and explanative.[85] They serve to organize and explain part of the social experiences, which are complicated and diverse. Hence there would usually be data that do not fit the theory.[86] This does not necessarily invalidate the theories, but shows their limits. With caution not to stretch the theories too much, they can be

[82] See Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 257 and Bar-Siman-Tov, *From Conflict Resolution*, 117.

[83] For more on the group-oriented personality of the New Testament world, see Bruce J. Malina, "The Individual and the Community: Personality in the Social World of Early Christianity," *BTB* 9 (1979): 126–38, Bruce J. Malina, "The First-Century Personality: The Individual and the Group," in *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, 3rd ed. (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 58–80 and Bruce J. Malina and Jerome H. Neyrey, "First-Century Personality: Dyadic, not Individualistic," in *The Social World of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation*, ed. J.H. Neyrey (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991), 67–96.

[84] For a discussion on the appropriateness of applying social identity theories to Biblical interpretation, see Coleman A. Baker, "Social Identity Theory and Biblical Interpretation," *BTB* 42 (2012): 132–34.

[85] The social-identity approach to conflict studies is in particular criticized for its lack of predictive power. See M.A. Hogg and K.D. Williams, "From I to We: Social Identity and the Collective Self," *GDTRP* 4 (2000): 81–97 and J.C. Turner and K.J. Reynolds, "The Social Identity Perspective in Intergroup Relations: Theories, Themes and Controversies," in *Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology: Intergroup Processes*, eds. R. Brown and S.L. Gaertner (Oxford: OUP, 2001), 133–52. However, this makes the approach more suitable for the purpose of this study, since social-scientific theories is used here to supplement the exegetical observations, rather than controlling the meaning of the text.

[86] For example, Norbert L. Kerr and Cynthia M. Kaufman-Gilliland, "Communication, Commitment, and Cooperation in Social Dilemmas," *JPSP* 66 (1994) 513–29 shows that some experimental results are contrary to group identity explanation.

useful tools for bringing into light the group dynamics indicated in James and the *Didache*.

1.3.2 Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation

The method of socio-rhetorical interpretation tries to bring together insights from rhetoric, anthropology and sociology studies. Robbins, the pioneer of socio-rhetorical interpretations, describes the method as "an approach to literature that focuses on values, convictions, and beliefs both in the texts we read and in the world in which we live. ... [I]t moves interactively into the world of people who wrote the texts and into our present world."[87] It stems from the awareness that language is a social phenomenon.[88] A text or speech reflects topics, settings, identities, and social structures of the author and the audience, but at the same time also shapes those topics, structures, and identities.[89] The effect of a piece of rhetoric does not only depend on how it is structured and delivered, but also on the psychological dynamics of the culture in which it is delivered and received.[90] Hence socio-rhetorical interpretation begins with an analysis of social and cultural dynamics in written works.[91] It recognizes that there are various layers of textures within a text, including inner texture, intertexture, social and cultural texture, ideological texture, and sacred texture.[92] In other words, socio-rhetorical interpretation emphasizes the complexity of the dynamics between text, culture and society, as well as between different aspects within the text. It seeks to give a better understanding of the text by exploring these dynamics.

The strength of socio-rhetorical interpretation lies in its openness to insights from different approaches to a text. Since no interpretation can exhaust the meaning

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[87] Vernon K. Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts: A Guide to Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996), 1.
[88] Vernon K. Robbins, "Social-Scientific Criticism and Literary Studies: Prospects for Cooperation in Biblical Interpretation," in *Modelling Early Christianity: Social-Scientific Studies of the New Testament in Its Context*, ed. Philip Esler (London, New York: Routledge, 1995), 289.
[89] Julia A. Snyder, *Language and Identity in Ancient Narratives*, WUNT 2/370 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014),15.
[90] Ben Witherington III, *New Testament Rhetoric: An Introductory Guide to the Art of Persuasion in and of the New Testament* (Eugene: Cascade, 2009), 16–17.
[91] Vernon K. Robbins, "Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation," in *The Blackwell Companion to the New Testament*, ed. D.E. Aune (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 193.
[92] Robbins, *Exploring the Texture*, 2–4.

of a text, and each method has its own limits, interaction between interpretations is necessary to explore the meanings of a text in more depth. Thus the task of socio-rhetorical interpretation is to keep inviting new methods and perspectives to become part of the critical, interpretive dialogue. In this sense, Wachob comments that "it may be regarded as something of an anti-method".[93] Since this study looks at the arguments in James and the *Didache* and evaluates their rhetorical strategies in light of the social-scientific theories described above, it is a "socio-rhetorical" approach in a broad sense. In the following study, literary issues such as meanings of individual words and sentences, relations between sections and paragraphs, structure and organization of arguments, and the socio-scientific tools will be applied to interpret how the rhetoric works under social and psychological dynamics within the individuals and among the communities of the audience. Through analyzing the interaction between texts and their social, cultural, and ideological backgrounds, one may understand more clearly the situations and purposes for producing these documents and the functions they might had in the early Christian communities.

Before this chapter ends, it must be stressed that while there are certain pitfalls for the attempts to reconstruct the background from biblical passages, the task is not impossible. As Foster comments in his commentary of Colossians:

> there is a very real danger of circularity. One interprets certain passages in light of the proposed situation that are seen as generating certain statements in the letter, then those interpretations are used to justify the reconstruction of the background to the letter as though that produced conclusive proof. While caution is necessary, the partial evidence should not lead to despair, or even a sense that the task is impossible.[94]

Therefore, although possibility of reconstructing the community behind ancient texts is often doubted, especially for texts like the letter of James, which contains mostly ethical instructions with general applicability, it is nevertheless possible to infer the community situations reflected in these texts with caution. Moreover, it should be noted that the aim of this study is not to argue for a specific

[93] Wesley H. Wachob, "The Languages of 'Household' and 'Kingdom' in the Letter of James: A Socio-Rhetorical Study," in Reading James with New Eyes: Methodological Reassessments of the Letter of James, eds. Robert L. Webb and John S. Kloppenborg, LNTS 342 (London; New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 151.
[94] Paul Foster, *Colossians*, BNTC (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016), 105.

historical situation of the initial recipients of James and the *Didache*. Rather, the aim is to show that social scientific theories can shed light on the group dynamics of communities of early believers, which are possibly reflected in James and the *Didache*. The cognizance of these social dynamics would then enhance one's understanding of these two documents.

1.4 Thesis Statement

This study will argue that the texts of both the letter of James and the *Didache* reflect situations of conflict, including intra-communal conflict as one of the major problems among the early Christian communities. The issue of intra-communal conflict provides a perspective to see the coherence of both James and the *Didache*. Both writings tried to deal with such conflicts by strengthening the social identity of the community members, among other strategies. However, there are also differences between the conflict resolution strategies in the two writings.

Chapter 2
Studies on Social Situations of James and the *Didache*

2.1 The Letter of James and Its Social Situations: A Review

Though the methods of biblical criticism have emerged over the last few centuries, the letter of James had not been given the same level of attention in critical biblical scholarship. Following the lead of scholars such as Dibelius, many commentators in the last century consider that James is impenetrable to social-contextual analysis,[1] and hence has little to contribute to the discussion of the historical and social situations of the early Christian communities.[2] However, scholars' opinion on James has begun to change in the last few decades. More work has been done to investigate the community issues reflected in the letter. In this section, major views on the social situation of James will be reviewed.

2.1.1 Dibelius' Legacy

In his commentary on James first published in 1921, with the English translation of the expanded seventh edition published in 1976, Dibelius asserts that although the "epistle" has the epistolary form at its beginning, its content suggests that James should not be regarded as a letter.[3] In his view, "the entire document lacks continuity in thought," and "there is not the slightest hint in the text of Jas that there were personal or other reasons which forced the author to compose this writing at that particular moment."[4] He concludes that James should be designated as paraenesis, "a text which strings together admonitions of general ethical content."[5]

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[1] See below section 2.1.1 for an introduction to Dibelius' view on James.
[2] This can be seen from the lack of detailed treatment of James in works on early Christianity. For example, Niels Hyldahl, *The History of Early Christianity*, SRHEC 3 (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1997), and John D. Crossan, *The Birth of Christianity: Discovering What Happened in the Years Immediately after the Execution of Jesus* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), both do not contain any treatment of James. Others only give James a very brief mention, see for example Georg Strecker, *History of New Testament Literature* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press, 1997), 79, and Detlev Dormeyer, *The New Testament among the Writings of Antiquity*, BS 55 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 213.
[3] Dibelius, *James*, 1–2. Ropes also holds a similar view. See Ropes, *James*, 6–10.
[4] Dibelius, *James*, 2.
[5] Ibid., 3.

Hence it would be futile to look for the social situation that stimulated the writing of James:

> In the case of Jas, one should not try to find the allusions which an actual letter might make to its milieu, to missionary activity, to the life of the community, to controversies over matters of faith, or to divisions in the community. Nor can one ask about the addressees.[6]

To be fair, Dibelius himself did provide a historical and social situation for James.[7] According to him, the earliest Christians, with their expectation of the imminent end of the world, did not concern much on an ethical renewal of the world. However, as time passes and the eschatological expectation began to fade, everyday problems required more attention from the church. As the teachings of Jesus do not cover all the areas of Christian life, Christian churches tried to find resources from other places, including the Diaspora Judaism and the Hellenistic world. Thus, various Christian writings are produced to provide the needed ethical teachings for the church, and James is one of these writings.

Nevertheless, Dibelius' classifying James as a random collection of ethical teachings has hinged the investigation of the letter's coherence and its social setting.[8] The persistent influence of Dibelius' view can be illustrated by Stower's study published in 1986, in which he regards James as "a series of seemingly disjointed hortatory *topoi* without any apparent unifying model or models."[9] However, Dibelius' views were in due course challenged by other scholars on James.[10] Perdue, for example, argues that even paraenesis can be connected to its social settings and has

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[6] Ibid., 46.
[7] Ibid., 3–5.
[8] For a large part of the last century, many commentators on James tend to agree with Dibelius' assessment. Some examples include Jean Cantinat, *Les Épîtres de Saint Jacques et de Saint Jude* (Paris: J. Gabalda 1973), Kümmel, *Introduction*, 403–16, Sophie Laws, *A Commentary on the Epistle of James* (London: Black, 1982), Rudolf Hoppe, *Jakobusbrief*, SKKNT 15 (Stuttgart, Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1989), 7–51. For a more detailed introduction on the influence of Dibelius' legacy, see Todd C. Penner, "The Epistle of James in Current Research," *CR:BS* 7 (1999): 262–67.
[9] Stanley K. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, LEC 5 (Philadelphia: Westminister, 1986), 97.
[10] Jackson-McCabe comments that the general shift, since the 1960s, toward reading strategies that emphasize coherence and connections in texts has brought a steady erosion in the hegemony of Dibelius's atomistic, form-critical approach to James. See Matt Jackson-McCabe, "The Messiah Jesus in the Mythic World of James," *JBL* 122/4 (2003): 703. See also the evaluation of recent Jamesian scholarship in Matthias Konradt, "Theologie in der 'stohernen Epistel': Ein Literaturbericht zu neueren Ansätzen in der Exegese des Jakobusbriefes," *VF* 44 (1999): 54–78.

its social functions.[11] Martin tries to search for a setting of James in light of Jewish history.[12] Laws, while seeing only a loose train of thought in James and asserting that the material is of general applicability, nevertheless claims that it is reasonable to suppose that the author had some idea of its initial readership, and in particular James' remarks about rich and poor reflect a real concern of the author.[13] Regarding the unity of James, Forbes tries to discern a unity of structure of James.[14] Mussner tries to build the unity of James on its eschatology.[15] Fry and Hiebert argue that the theme of testing acts as a unifying motif of James.[16] Furthermore, Adamson maintains that the sustained unity of James' structure is indisputable.[17] These attempts aim at seeing James in a more comprehensive manner so that the writing's unity, core message and purpose would become more discernible. However, it was P.H. Davids who sparked a more thorough departure from Dibelius.

2.1.2 Davids: The Theology of Suffering in James

In his commentary on James, published in 1982, Davids proposes that there is indeed coherence and a theological framework within James. He identifies seven interrelated themes in James, including suffering; eschatology; Christology; poverty-piety; law, grace and faith; wisdom; and prayer.[18] Regarding the initial audience, he is more optimistic than Dibelius in finding some information about the community, although he is reserved in reconstructing a historical situation for James, since there seems to be no definite crisis observable in the letter.[19] He situates James in a

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[11] See Leo G. Perdue, "Paraenesis and the Epistle of James," *ZNW* 72 (1981): 241–56 and Leo G. Perdue, "The Social Character of Paraenesis and Paraenetic Literature," *Semeia* 50 (1990): 5–27.

[12] Ralph P. Martin, "The Life-Setting of the Epistle of James in the Light of Jewish History," in *Biblical and Near Eastern Studies: Essays in Honor of William Sanford LaSor*, ed. G.A. Tuttle (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 97–103.

[13] Laws, *James*, 6–10.

[14] P.B.R. Forbes, "The Structure of the Epistle of James," *EQ* 44 (1972): 147–53.

[15] Franz Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, HTKNT 13/1 (Freiburg: Herder, 1987). Mussner revised his earlier view to see even more thematic unity in James. See Franz Mussner, "Die ethische Motivation im Jakobusbrief," in *Neues Testament und Ethik*, ed. H. Merklein (Freiburg: Herder, 1989), 416–23.

[16] See Euan Fry, "The Testing of Faith: A Study of the Structure of the Book of James," *BT* 29 (1978): 427–35, and D. Edmond Hiebert, "The Unifying Theme of the Epistle of James," *BSac* 135 (1978): 221–31.

[17] James B. Adamson, *The Epistle of James*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 20.

[18] Peter H. Davids, *The Epistle of James: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1982), 34–57. See also Peter H. Davids, "Theological Perspectives on the Epistle of James," *JETS* 23 (1980): 97–103.

[19] Davids, *James*, 28–30. Davids' reservation on reconstructing the historical situation is reasonable, since the exhortations in James focus more on the required qualities of believers rather than on

background of tension between the powerful rich and the oppressed poor, among the latter is the majority of Israelites and members of the church who suffer immensely in the economically unbalanced society. This tension also affects the inner life of the faith community. For Davids, the theology of James is primarily *Leidenstheologie*, a theology of suffering. The letter shows an author concerned with a community undergoing suffering caused both by oppression from outside and dissension from inside the group. Davids thus unites the various themes of James under the topic of suffering.

Davids' assessment of James stimulated further critical studies of James on literary, historical, theological and sociological levels.[20] Studies aimed at relating the content and rhetoric of James to the letter's social backgrounds emerged in the last few decades.

2.1.3 Tension of Wealth and Poverty in James

P.U. Maynard-Reid, like Davids, reads James from the perspective of the oppressed poor in the society.[21] He goes one step further than Davids and insists that the letter has a close and direct relation with the social environment of the early

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specific crisis. However, it does not necessary mean that no concrete community issue can be observed in James. See further discussions in sections below.

[20] Some studies for the situation and theological themes of James include Wiard Popkes, *Adressaten, Situation und Form des Jakobusbriefes*, Stuttgarter Bibelstudien 125/126 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1986), Wiard Popkes, "James and Paraenesis Reconsidered," in *Texts and Contexts: Biblical Texts in their Textual and Situational Contexts*, eds. T. Fornberg and D. Hellholm (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1995), 535–61, Martin Hengel, "Der Jakobusbrief als antipaulinische Polemik," in *Tradition and Interpretation in the New Testament: Essays in Honor of E. Earle Ellis for his 60th Birthday*, eds. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Otto Betz (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1987), 248–78. A study of James with historic approach is found in Vasiliki Limberies, "The Provenance of the Caliphate Church: James 2.17–26 and Galatians 3 Reconsidered," in *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel: Investigations and Proposals*, eds. C.A. Evans and J.A. Sanders, JSNTSup 148; SSEJC 5 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 397–420. Studies of the rhetoric, sturcture and coherence of James include Hubert Frankemölle, "Das semantische Netz des Jakobusbriefes: Zur Einheit eines umstrittenen Briefes," *BZ* 34 (1990): 161–97, Watson, "The Rhetoric of James 3:1–12," 48–64, Watson, "James 2 in Light of Greco-Roman Schemes of Argumentation," 84–121, Lauri Thurén, "Risky Rhetoric in James?" *NovT* 37 (1995): 262–84, Mark E. Taylor, *A Text-Linguistic Investigation into the Discourse Structure of James*, LNTS 311 (London: T&T Clark, 2006).

[21] Pedrito U. Maynard-Reid, *Poverty and Wealth in James* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1987). More recently, Tamez also follows a similar line of interpretation on James. See Elsa Tamez, *The Scandalous Message of James: Fatih without Works is Dead*, trans. John Eagleson (New York: Crossroad, 1990). For a description of the ancient society with limited good, see Bruce J. Malina, "The Perception of Limited Good: Maintaining One's Social Status," in *The New Testament World*, 81–107.

church, in particular the antithesis between the rich and the poor.[22] According to Maynard-Reid, the principle purpose of the letter is "to give consolation and comfort to the poor and oppressed," with a strong social justice stance.[23] One of the main problems addressed in James is a shift in the faith community's attitude towards wealth, a tendency to "modify its harsh position against the rich and riches but at the same time promote and aim for egalitarianism among its member."[24] The author of James writes this letter because he sees the community to which he is writing as "practicing the action that he is condemning; he is appealing to them to stop."[25]

Maynard-Reid's stress on the socio-economic background of James is echoed by studies of other scholars such as Ahrens, Mongstad-Kvammen, and Painter. Ahrens' investigation on the topic of rich and poor in James concludes that the depiction of the poor in James refers to realistic situations, related to the social structure of the Roman Empire, rather than an idealized concept.[26] Mongard-Kvammen's postcolonial reading of Jas 2:1–13 further argues that the issue of rich and poor relates more to the social ranks than to poverty and wealth as such.[27] On the other hand, Painter proposes that the problem of poverty in James reflects the situation in Jerusalem before 66 CE.[28] He further suggests that the situation was probably related to the conflict between aristocratic Sadducean high priestly party and the poorer priests.

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[22] Maynard-Reid, *Poverty and Wealth*, 59. It should be noted that understanding the language of rich and poor in the New Testament world primarily in economic terms is not universally supported. One example is Malina's study on the concept of rich and poor in the New Testament world, in which he asserts that "poor" denotes primarily those who cannot maintain their inherited status. See Bruce J. Malina, "Wealth and Poverty in the New Testament and Its World," *Int* 41 (1987): 354–67. Moxnes' observation that in the ancient world economy is embedded in the life and value systems of the society further highlights the social and moral aspects of economy. See Halvor Moxnes, *The Economy of the Kingdom: Social Conflict and Economic Relations in Luke's Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 22–47. Cheung also argues that rich and poor in James are not merely socio-economic descriptions, but are ethical categories. See Luke L. Cheung, *The Genre, Composition and Hermeneutics of James* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2003), 260.

[23] Maynard-Reid, *Poverty and Wealth*, 97.

[24] Ibid., 37.

[25] Ibid., 49.

[26] Matthias Ahrens, *Der Realitäten Wiederschein oder Arm und Reich im Jakobusbrief: Eine sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Berlin: Alektor, 1995), 97–139.

[27] Ingeborg Mongstad-Kvammen, *Toward a Postcolonial Reading of the Epistle of James: James 2:1–13 in Its Roman Imperial Context*, BIS 119 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 73–100.

[28] John Painter, *Just James: The Brother of Jesus in History and Tradition* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 249–51.

Maynard-Reid's study has the merit of taking seriously James' historical and social background, and also the significance of faith in God for the social stance of the church. However, Maynard-Reid may have gone too far in asserting that James is endorsing the rights of the poor to demand the justice and rewards of their labor. As David Edgar observes, "the text [of James] as such does not constitute an overt defense of the rights of these radicals."[29]

Wachob also discusses the issue of rich and poor in James. He maintains that the letter of James is socially oriented, concerning the faith community as a whole more than individuals.[30] In particular, in his study of Jas 2:1–13, Wachob analyzes in detail how the "communitarian argumentation" in this passage seeks to create an ideal community.[31] He asserts that in the central statement in Jas 2:5, James "sets forth in a single sentence the social identity, the way of life and the goal of God's chosen poor."[32] God has chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of his kingdom. Consequently, the believers of Christ should identify themselves with the poor in order to become part of this kingdom. On the other hand, James tries to persuade his audience through the rhetorical questions in 2:6–7 to recognize that the rich are their enemies. This rhetorical move "promotes the peculiar identity and solidarity of the elect community against rich outsiders."[33] However, Wachob cautions that the conflict between the rich and the poor is not merely between insiders and outsiders. Rather it is being replicated in the interpersonal relations within the community itself.[34] Therefore, James is not only concerned with

[29] David H. Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen the Poor? The Social Setting of the Epistle of James*, JSNTSup 206 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 135.
[30] Several authors have observed that the ethic in James is community oriented rather than individual ethic. See for example Patrick J. Hartin, *A Spirituality of Perfection: Faith in Action in the Letter of James* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1999), 5, 56, Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 50, Luke T. Johnson, "The Social World of James: Literary Analysis and Historical Reconstruction," in *Brother of Jesus, Friend of God: Studies in the Letter of James* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 120–21. Strange observes that James is particularly concerned about group solidarity and preservation, see James R. Strange, *The Moral World of James: Setting the Epistle in Its Greco-Roman and Judaic Environments*, StBL 136 (New York: P. Lang, 2010), 21. Also, Perdue notes that James as anti-traditional paraenesis serves to protect an inner group from the cultural values of the outside world. See Perdue, "Social Character," 26.
[31] Wesley H. Wachob, *The Voice of Jesus in the Social Rhetoric of James*, SNTSMS 106 (Cambridge: University Press, 2000), 154–93.
[32] Wachob, "'Household' and 'Kingdom'," 167.
[33] Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, 90.
[34] Ibid., 182.

the boundaries between the Church and the world but is also tackling critical problems within the faith community.

Alicia Batten further explores the socio-economical issue in James. While accepting the view that James is an encyclical letter resembling the Jewish diaspora letters, she does not see James as general teachings for the faith community. Rather, Batten maintains that paraenesis can address a social situation in order to promote a particular set of values.[35] She further claims that the admonitions about rich and poor in James must be provoked by some sort of social problem related to wealth, or at least the author was seeing the problem emerging on the horizon.[36] In contrast to Maynard-Reid, who regards the community of James as consisting almost exclusively of lower class members in the society, Batten affirms that early Christian communities, including the audience of James, contained people from different social strata.[37] This diversity in the socio-economic situations among the members caused inner conflicts within the community.[38] That is why "a good proportion of James addresses the issue of community conflict."[39] In particular, she identifies the patron-client system as posing a danger on the faith community.[40] Batten sees one of the main purposes of James is to challenge the audience's reliance upon some rich

[35] Alicia J. Batten, "Ideological Strategies in the Letter of James," in *Reading James with New Eyes*, eds. Robert L. Webb and John S. Kloppenborg, LNTS 342 (London; New York: T&T Clark, 2007),15.
[36] Alicia J. Batten, *Friendship and Benefaction in James*, ESEC 15 (Dorset: Deo, 2010), 129. Batten's comment implies that James indeed can shed light on the situations of the audience, either occurrences that are already happening or crises that are likely to happen. This is contrary to Davids' view that James reflect the *Sitz im Leben* of its place of publication instead of its "recipients". See Davids, *James*, 24.
[37] See Alicia J. Batten, "The Urban and Agrarian in the Letter of James," *JECH* 3.2 (2013): 5–9 and Alicia J. Batten, "The Urbanization of Jesus Traditions in James," in *James, 1 & 2 Peter, and Early Jesus Traditions*, eds. Alicia J. Batten and John S. Kloppenborg, LNTS 478 (London; New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014), 83–90. See also John S. Kloppenborg, "James 1:2–15 and Hellenistic Psychagogy," *NovT* 52 (2010): 71.
[38] Batten, *Friendship and Benefaction*, 138. See also the discussion in David A. Kaden, "Stoicism, Social Stratification, and the Q Tradition in James: A Suggestion about James' Audience," in *James, 1 & 2 Peter, and Early Jesus Traditions*, eds. Alicia J. Batten and John S. Kloppenborg, LNTS 478 (London; New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014), 112–19, where Kaden compares social stratification in James and writings of Epictetus and Seneca.
[39] Batten, *Friendship and Benefaction*, 146.
[40] The relevance of the patron-client system in the Greco-Roman world to the theme of rich and poor in James has been noted by several authors. See for example Edgar, *Has God not Chosen the Poor*, 118–25, Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, 178–85, John S. Kloppenborg, "Status und Wohltätigkeit bei Paulus und Jakobus," in *von Jesus zum Christus: Christologischen Studien*, eds. R. Hoppe and U. Busse, BZNW 93 (Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1998), 150–54, Hengel, "Der Jakobusbrief," 544–46, and John S. KIoppenborg, "Patronage Avoidance in James," *HvTSt* 55 (1999): 765–84.

patrons, and to dissuade the audience from being attracted by the surrounding social world and the benefits it seems to offer by depicting God as the supreme benefactor standing in opposition to the images of patrons.[41]

The above attempts to discern the social situation of James in terms of its socio-economical background contribute much to connecting James with the social world of the early church, especially the tension between the rich and the poor. These investigations show that it is reasonable to regard James as responding to some community issues among his audience. However, since the issue of rich and poor only occupies a portion of the content of the epistle, much more can be done to reveal the conflict situations reflected in James and the letter's strategy for resolving them.

2.1.4 James and Purity of the Faith Community

John Elliott has applied sociological approaches to James in a sustained manner.[42] Instead of expounding the social situations of James' addressee, he places his focus on how the social concepts of purity and pollution permeates the letter. He shows that these traditional concepts provide coherent thematic for the letter and serve the author's purpose of pressing for a restoration of holiness and wholeness of the Christian community. According to Elliott, James offers a poignant witness to the dilemmas confronted by the early Christian community in its engagement and compromises with society.[43] He thus identifies one of the purpose of James as being the desire to reinforce the distinctive ethos of the Christian community.[44] According to Elliott, these themes and purposes give coherence and structure to the letter. Following Popkes' description of the letter,[45] he concludes that James can be classified as a *Korrekturschreiben*. Drawing on Mary Douglas' observations,[46] Elliott suggests that concepts of purity and pollution are used in James to bring conceptual and social order to an otherwise chaotic world.

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[41] Batten, *Friendship and Benefaction*, 119.
[42] John H. Elliott, "The Epistle of James in Rhetorical and Social Scientific Perspective: Holiness-Wholeness and Patterns of Replication," *BTB* 29 (1999): 79–89.
[43] Ibid., 79.
[44] Ibid., 78.
[45] Popkes, *Adressaten*, 209.
[46] Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 3–7.

Darian Lockett further develops Elliott's application of purity and pollution categories for studying the social and ideological concerns of James. While following Elliott in seeing the concept of purity as central to James,[47] he criticizes Elliott for conflating James' use of purity concepts with the notion of perfection.[48] Like Elliott, Lockett bases his analysis of James on Douglas' studies on purity and pollution, especially the functions of purity and pollution conceptions in shaping human behavior and social interaction, by maintaining order and creating order in a previously undefined situation.[49] By building up and strengthening boundaries between the pure faith community and the defiling world, James urges the audience to maintain a distinct identity by completely following the will of God in their lives and interactions.

In contrast to Bauckham, who questions the validity of regarding James as functioning as a real letter,[50] Lockett insists on the epistolary character of James.[51] He maintains that James "should be interpreted as an intentional piece of writing addressed to a definable audience."[52] Hence it is possible and even essential to discern the social and religious situations of the audience, as well as the strategy of argumentation used by the author to address those issues. By constructing the polar opposition between two worldviews, James on the one hand challenges contemporary Greco-Roman values,[53] while on the other hand leads the audience to make decisions as to which worldview they will adhere.[54] Using Barclay's model of assimilation, acculturation and accommodation,[55] Lockett analyzes the cultural stance of both the

[47] Contra Scot McKnight, "A Parting within the Way: Jesus and James on Israel and Purity," in *James the Just and Christian Origins*, eds., B. Chilton and C. A. Evans, NovTSup 98 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 117–129, who asserts that purity is not a central theme of James.
[48] Darian Lockett, "'Unstained by the World': Purity and Pollution as an Indicator of Cultural Interaction in the Letter of James," in *Reading James with New Eyes: Methodological Reassessments of the Letter of James*, eds. Robert L. Webb and John S. Kloppenborg, LNTS 342 (London, New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 50–51.
[49] Lockett, "Unstained," 52–53.
[50] For Bauckham's discussion on the epistolary nature of James, see Richard Bauckham, *James: Wisdom of James, Disciple of Jesus the Sage* (London: Routledge, 1999), 11–13.
[51] Lockett, *Purity and Worldview in the Epistle of James*, LNTS 366 (London, New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 66–70.
[52] Ibid., 70.
[53] Lockett, "Unstained," 69. See also Bauckham, *James*, 189.
[54] Lockett, "Unstained," 69
[55] John M.G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: from Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE-117 CE)* (Edinburgh : T&T Clark, 1996), 82–102.

author and the audience of James with respect to the dominant Greco-Roman culture. He concludes that James has no intention to define the identity of the audience in terms of outsiders or opponents, but is only arguing against a too aggressive assimilation of believers with the values, attitudes and actions of "the world".[56] This means that "the boundary lines between church and culture as definite, yet permeable."[57] James does not request the audience to completely separate themselves from the larger society, but warns against adopting values and worldviews that are incompatible with God's kingdom.

The works of Elliott and Lockett highlight the tensions between the church and its surrounding society in James. However, they seem not to pay sufficient attention to the tensions within the faith community itself. Granted that the inner tensions are closely related to the adoption of the dominant value of the world by the believers, or in Lockett's word, "internal strife arises from neglecting this primary, external boundary,"[58] it is not sufficient to view the issues addressed in James only as problems at the external boundary. According to Douglas, there are four kinds of social pollution: danger pressing on external boundaries, danger from transgressing the internal lines of system, danger in the margins of the lines, and danger from internal contradiction.[59] One implication is that the language of purity and pollution also has important significance for maintaining and strengthening the internal order of a community. Hence, a closer look at the internal tensions among the audience of James is needed for a better understanding of this book.

2.1.5 James and Meal Gatherings

Regarding James' social setting, D.J. Verseput claims that "James is to be read neither as a collection of moral precepts for the individual nor as wisdom literature narrowly defined, but as a Jewish-Christian letter to the Diaspora regarding the regulation of the familiar areas of communal discord typical of ancient voluntary

[56] Lockett, *Purity and Worldview*, 166.
[57] Lockett, "Strong and Weak Lines: Permeable Boundaries between Church and Culture in the Letter of James." *RevExp* 108 (2011): 395.
[58] Lockett, *Purity and Worldview*, 183.
[59] Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 151–52.

associations."[60] He compares James to other Jewish Diaspora letters to show that James can also be regarded as such.[61] He thus concludes that James is indeed a real letter written to encourage the faith community in their distressing situations by appealing to the covenantal promises of God.

Verseput further tries to compare the instructions in James to other contemporary instructions to voluntary associations in the Greco-Roman world.[62] He argues that it is possible or even quite probable that the early church would have similar social concerns as other associations.[63] He then claims that the purposes of James "lay in the regulation of those typical communal squabbles which were consistently a source of concern in the ancient world."[64] Comparing James with Plutarch's *Quaestiones convivales*, Verseput further observes that James' concern for "quarrels, seating and communal leadership, bear a striking correspondence to the problems of private social gatherings reflected in Plutarch's sympotic dialogues."[65] He thus concludes that the order of dinner parties is a main concern of James.

Recently Peter-Ben Smit, seemingly independently from Verseput, made similar observations. He argues that "[f]or the study of early Christianity, meals, as they were held in the context of voluntary associations, are of relevance given that a high degree of organizational and functional agreement between these societies and

[60] Donald J. Verseput, "Genre and Story: The Community Setting of the Epistle of James," *CBQ* 62 (2000): 97–99.
[61] Verseput, "Genre and Story," 100–104. See also Donald J. Verseput, "Wisdom, 4Q185, and the Epistle of James," *JBL* 117 (1998): 701–3 and Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr, "Der Jakobusbrief im Licht frühjüdischer Diasporabriefe," *NTS* 44 (1998): 420–43.
[62] Verseput, "Genre and Story," 104–6.
[63] The resemblance of the early church to the contemporary voluntary associations is also noted by other scholars. See for example Richard S. Ascough, "The Thessalonian Christian Community as a Professional Voluntary Association," *JBL* 119 (2000): 311–28, Richard S. Ascough, "A Question of Death: Paul's Community-Building Language in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18," *JBL* 123 (2004): 509–30, Wayne O. McCready, "*Ekklēsia* and Voluntary Associations," in *Voluntary Associations in the Graeco-Roman World*, eds. John S. Kloppenborg and Stephen G. Wilson (London: Routledge, 1996), 59–73 and Peter Richardson, "Early Synagogues as Collegia in the Diaspora and Palestine," in *Voluntary Associations in the Graeco-Roman World*, eds. John S. Kloppenborg and Stephen G. Wilson (London: Routledge, 1996), 93–104. For an introduction to voluntary associations in the Greco-Roman world, see John S. Kloppenborg, "Collegia and *Thiasoi*: Issues in Function, Taxonomy and Membership," in *Voluntary Associations in the Graeco-Roman World*, 16–30.
[64] Verseput, "Genre and Story," 110.
[65] Donald J. Verseput, "Plutarch of Chaeronea and the Epistle of James on Communal Behaviour," *NTS* 47 (2001): 511.

early Christian communities can be found."[66] He also compares the debates in Plutarch's writings with the admonitions in James, and sees a close agreement between them in terms of issues concerned, especially the problem of seating order.[67] He thus regards the meal gatherings of voluntary associations as the best background for interpreting James.[68]

Verseput and Smit's contribution lays in their attempts to explore perspectives on social settings and communal concerns in the Greco-Roman world which form the larger background for the letter of James. However, although they are aware of the difference between the foundation of arguments of James and other Greco-Roman authors, on the whole their discussions focus too much on the analogues of themes, without paying sufficient attention to the differences between their purposes, worldviews and instruction details. This is especially true in the case of Smit. One example should suffice to illustrate the inadequacy of his argument. In his discussion of Jas 2:1–13, Smit tries to put the scenario in 2:2–4 in a symposiastic setting.[69] Regarding it as a meal gathering of voluntary associations, he further claims that the issue concerned here is primarily the problem of seating order.[70] Such an interpretation has not paid sufficient attention to the focus of the pericope, which is stated in 2:1 as the inconsistency between believers behavior and their claimed faith. The elaboration on the theme of wealth and poverty and the emphasis on mercy in 2:5–13 cannot sufficiently be explained by the issue of seating order in meal gathering either. Therefore, their proposal of reading James in terms of meal gatherings should not be accepted as a sufficient ground for interpreting the purpose and strategy of the letter.

2.1.6 James and Gaining Sympathy from Jews

Another proposal for the purpose of James is given by D.C. Allison. He maintains that James is a pseudegraphon written in the second century.[71] He takes a strictly literal interpretation of the opening address in Jas 1:1. Thus, he claims that

[66] Peter-Ben Smit, "A Symposiastic Background to James?" *NTS* 58 (2012): 107.
[67] Ibid., 110.
[68] Ibid., 117–21.
[69] Ibid., 110–14. See also Verseput, "Plutarch of Chaeronea," 514–16.
[70] Smit, "Symposiastic Background," 110.
[71] Allison, *James*, 3–32.

the intended audience of James includes not only Christian Jews but also Jews that are non-Christians.[72] On the other hand, Allison claims that the pseudepigraphic nature of James implies that not only the author, but also the audience is fictional. This means that although it is historically unlikely that James was addressed to all Jews in the diaspora, it does not prevent one from taking the opening address of James literally and asserting that James was addressed to some Jewish communities.[73] With this understanding of the nature and addressees of James, Allison proposes that James was written in response to an environment where non-Christian Jews were hostile to those Christian Jews still living among them, even to the extent of beginning to use "the *Birkat ha-minim* or something very much like it" to curse the Christians.[74] Building upon the works of Moulton[75] and McNeile,[76] Allison suggests that James seeks to "promote tolerance, to gain sympathy for Christians in a context where there is perhaps growing antipathy" from the non-Christian Jews.[77] Allison sees three groups in the mind of the author of the letter: the oppressed Christian Jews, the hostile Jews, and those belonging to neither group. James was trying to gain the sympathy of the last group.[78] Hence, in Allison's view, one of the main purposes of James is to deal with community conflict, not within Christian communities but among Jewish communities that contain both Christians and non-Christians.

Allison's work is helpful in highlighting the Jewish characteristics of the letter of James. However, it is done at a cost of downplaying the importance of

[72] Dale C. Allison, Jr., "The Fiction of James and Its *Sitz im Leben*," *RB* 108 (2001): 531–53. In particular, Allison appeals to observations made by Dunn that in the first few centuries, Judaism and Christianity were not always as clearly distinct as traditionally presupposed. See James D. G. Dunn, "Two Covenants or One? The Interdependence of Jewish and Christian Identity," in *Geschichte—Tradition—Reflexion: Festschrift für Martin Hengel zum 70. Geburstag*, eds. Hubert Cancik et. al., vol. 3, *Frühes Christentum* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1996), 97–122.
[73] Allison, "Fiction," 553–55.
[74] Dale C. Allison, Jr., "Blessing God and Cursing People: Jas 3:9–10," *JBL* 130 (2011): 399.
[75] James H. Moulton, "Synoptic Studies II: The Epistle of James and the Sayings of Jesus," *Expositor* 7.4 (1907): 45–55.
[76] Alan H. McNeile, *New Testament Teaching in the Light of St. Paul's* (Cambridge: University Press, 1923), 87–110 and Alan H. McNeile and Charles S.C. Williams, *An Introduction to the Study of the New Testament*, 2nd edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), 201–208.
[77] Allison, "Fiction," 568. Here Allison agrees with McNeile's view in contrast with Moulton's view that James seeks to proselytize the Jews. See Moulton, "Synoptic Studies," 47–50 and McNeile, *New Testament Teaching*, 90–95. Kloppenborg also seems to accept Allison's view. See John S. Kloppenborg, "Diaspora Discourse: The Construction of Ethos in James," *NTS* 53 (2007): 251–55.
[78] Allison, *James*, 45–46.

Christology in James, which, besides the two explicit reference in 1:1 and 2:1, is most obviously seen in the role of Christ as Judge (5:9).[79] Moreover, even though in the first two centuries there were probably still close interactions between Christian Jews and the larger Jewish community, it is hardly conceivable that a Christian author would try to gain the sympathy of the non-Christian Jews *without* highlighting the distinctiveness of Jesus Christ, as Allison seems to suggest. Therefore, though Allison's suggestion is attractive, upon balancing the evidence it is still more likely that James was addressed to Jewish Christians, rather than Jewish groups at large. Nevertheless, Allison makes an important observation that James was seeking to resolve conflict among its audience.

2.1.7 Conclusion

Although Dibelius' assessment of James as paraenesis with little coherence in structure and theology had been influential, the last few decades see an emergence of James scholarship that departs from his presuppositions. The precise geographical and historical setting of James may be difficult to reconstruct, but the social dynamics reflected in the letter can still be explored. Attempts have been made to explore the social background, purpose, and rhetoric strategies of James. The issue of wealth and poverty is particularly well investigated. It is also suggested that the letter not only seeks to mould the behavior and practices of the audience, but also shapes the identity perception and strengthens the solidarity of the faith community, both by stressing the community's boundaries with the outside world and by emphasizing the community's distinctive status before God. All these studies have made important contributions to the interpretation of James in light of its social situations. However, some aspects of the letter are still to be explored.

It has been noted that the community of James was facing internal conflict as well as tension with the outside world. While one should be cautious that it is likely that James was rejecting some dominant worldly value systems more than opposing a

[79] Studies on Christology in James indicate that Christology permeates the whole letter. See for example William R. Baker, "Christology in the Epistle of James," *EQ* 74 (2002): 47–57, Robert B. Sloan, "The Christology of James," *CTR* 1.1 (1986): 3–29, Franz Mussner, "'Direkte' und 'indirekte' Christologie im Jakobusbrief," *Catholica* 24 (1970): 111-17, and J. Julius Scott, Jr., "Commas and the Christology of The Epistle of James," paper read at ETS National Meeting, Danvers, MA, 1999.

concrete rival group,[80] the teachings in James nevertheless reflect that some conflict instances were probably occurring among its audience. This aspect of James should not be ignored, especially if one sees James as addressing a concrete audience, even if that is a broad one.[81] However, so far there are still no studies on James that try to give a more comprehensive picture of the conflict situations among the audience, especially the inner-group conflicts, in order to view the letter from the perspective of its conflict resolution and group maintenance strategies. This is an area worth exploring. Such a study would hopefully deepen one's understanding of this often neglected book in the New Testament and unfold the letter's relevance to conflict resolution for the faith communities today.

2.2 The *Didache* and Its Social Situation: A Review

Since the re-discovery and publication of the *Didache* in the late nineteenth century by Bryennios,[82] this long-lost text has been the subject of much research, especially after Harnack's influential edition of the *Didache*.[83] In the earliest research into the document, various historical settings have already been suggested. Vokes summarizes some early views as follows: "Bryennius [*sic*] found in it attacks on Antinomianism and Montanism, Krawutzcky found traces of Ebionitism, while Hilgenfeld found Montanist interpolations in an anti-Montanist original."[84] Vokes himself took an opposite position from the last view, arguing for a Montanist origin of the *Didache*.[85] Most of these early speculations are negated by the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which contain a Two Ways tradition most apparent in 1QS. Since

[80] Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 245.

[81] McCartney argues that the situations described in James are not merely hypothetical examples, but do reflect real situations of the audience. He claims that the author appears to have heard some disturbing news, and he is addressing real problems. See Dan G. McCartney, *James*, BECNT (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2009), 37–38. See also Moo, *James*, 23–25. This is contrary to Bauckham, who holds that James does not seem to respond to the specific problems and needs of a particular community. See Bauckham, *James*, 26–28. There will be more discussion on the epistolary property of James in section 3.1 below.

[82] Philotheos Bryennios, *Διδαχὴ τῶν δώδεκα ἀποστόλων* (Constantinople: Boutura, 1883).

[83] Adolf von Harnack, *Die Lehre der zwölf Apostel nebst Untersuchungen zur ältesten Geschichte der Kirchenverfassung und des Kirchenrechts* (Leipzig: Hinrichse, 1884).

[84] Frederick E. Vokes, *The Riddle of the Didache: Fact or Fiction, Heresy or Catholicism?* (London: SPCK, 1938), 129.

[85] This view is suggested by Connolly. See R.H. Connolly, "The Didache and Montanism," *DRev* 55 (1937): 339–47. However, Vokes later retracted his earlier position. See F.E. Vokes, "The Didache Re-examined," *Theology* 58 (1955): 12–16, F.E. Vokes, "The Didache and the Canon of the New Testament," in *Studia Evangelica* 3, ed. Frank L. Cross, TU 88 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1964), 427–36, and F.E. Vokes, "The Didache: Still Debated," *ChQ* 3 (1970): 57–62.

then, the milieu of the *Didache* has been reassessed. Some consensus on the community situations being dealt in the *Didache* has been reached, though many issues are still debated. In the following, important discussions on the community issues in the *Didache* will be reviewed.

2.2.1 Audet: Reassessing the Historical Setting

Jean-Paul Audet was among the first scholars to recognize the significance of the Scrolls for the debate about the provenance and historical settings of the *Didache*.[86] Audet observed that the Two Ways tradition found in the second section of 1QS proves that *Barnabas* could not be the author of the Two Ways material, in contrast to the once popular view before the discovery of the Scrolls that the author of *Barnabas* created the Two Ways section in it.[87] This allowed him to date the *Didache* to the mid-first century.[88] He further suggested a three-stage composition for the document,[89] indicating a development of thoughts in the community that produced the *Didache* in response to changing situations of the community.

Audet's attempt to trace the Two Ways materials in the *Didache* to an ancient Two Ways tradition has significantly pushed back the dating of the document. There are some scholars who follow his mid-first century dating of the *Didache*.[90] In particular, Garrow even argues for Matthew's dependence on the *Didache*, in part based on the early dating of the *Didache*.[91] However, the majority view opts for a date around the end of the first century or the beginning of the second century.[92] Such a dating places the *Didache* in a very different context from those early suggestions.

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[86] Jean-Paul Audet, "Literary and Doctrinal Affinities of the 'Manual of Discipline'," in *The* Didache *in Modern Research*, ed. Jonathan A. Draper, AGJU 37 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 129–47.
[87] J.A. Robinson was one of the proposers of this view. See J. Armitage Robinson, "The Epistle of Barnabas and the Didache," *JTS* 35 (1934): 113–46.
[88] Audet, *Didache*, 187–210.
[89] Ibid., 104–20.
[90] Some examples of early dating of the *Didache* include Jean Daniélou, *Theology of Jewish Christianity*, trans. John A. Baker (London-Chicago, 1964), 30, Adam, "Erwägungen," 1–47, and Aaron Milavec, *The Didache: Faith, Hope, and Life of the Earliest Christian Communities, 50–70 CE* (New York: Newman, 2003), xxvi–xxxiii.
[91] Garrow, *Matthew's Dependence*, 161–252.
[92] For a summary of the dating of the *Didache*, see Jefford, *Sayings of Jesus*, 3–17.

Moreover, the Jewish roots of the Two Ways tradition also suggest a Jewish-Christian origin of the *Didache* and the possibility of interpreting the writing with respect to the relation between Christian and Jewish communities. Furthermore, many see in the *Didache* the issue of Jewish-Gentile relation, especially its tension with Paul's teaching.[93]

Audet's suggestion of redaction layers of the *Didache* has also shaped commentators' understanding of this composition. For example, Kraft claims that the *Didache* is a collection of traditional material which is not consistently digested by the compiler.[94] This means that "the present form of the *Didache* does not necessarily represent the main interests and beliefs of the community for which *this form* of the *Didache* manual was produced."[95] Such assessment of the *Didache* echoes Dibelius' classifying James as paraenesis, lacking in continuity, structure, life situation, and consistent theology. However, the existence of different compositional stages does not necessarily indicate a lack of context. For instance, Giet agrees with Kraft's view that the *Didache* is an accumulation of interpolations rather than the work of one author. Nevertheless, Giet views the development of the text as reflecting the progress in response to external circumstances.[96] Two more recent attempts to reconstruct the historical development of the community of the *Didache* from its redaction layers are made by Pardee[97] and Jefford.[98] They both propose various stages of composition of the *Didache*, with new materials included in each stage in order to respond to the new challenges to the community. These challenges include the tension between Jewish and Gentile believers and the need to regulate the performance of rituals as well as the organizational system of Christian communities. These studies show that it is possible to investigate the *Sitz im Leben* of the *Didache* and to ask how this writing responds to the need of the community that produced it.

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[93] See below section 2.2.4.
[94] Robert A. Kraft, *The Apostolic Fathers III: Barnabas and the Didache* (New York: Nelson, 1965), 2.
[95] Ibid., 65. Emphasis original.
[96] Stanislas Giet, *L'énigme de la Didachè*, PFLUS 149 (Paris: Ophrys 1970), 257–62. Such is also the basic supposition underlying Niederwimmer's redaction criticism of the *Didache*. See Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 42–44.
[97] Nancy Pardee, *The Genre and Development of the Didache: A Text-Linguistic Analysis* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012). See also Pardee, "Visualizing the Christian Community," 80–87.
[98] Jefford, "Locating the *Didache*," 59–66.

2.2.2 Schöllgen: The *Didache* as Selective Church Order

Another important observation about the nature of the *Didache* is made by G. Schöllgen. He notes that the rules given in the *Didahce* are of very limited scope, and sometimes deal only with matters which seem to be of secondary importance. He thus concludes:

> Inside this framework it pursues only a limited goal: it is concerned to correct abuses and to address new rules to changed circumstances—often in the face of resistance. Large parts of the community life, in which the author sees no problems, remain unconsidered.[99]

Schöllgen is certainly correct in not viewing the *Didache* as a comprehensive church order. Hence it is inappropriate to argue from the silence of the document.[100] Moreover, the selective nature of the *Didache* also has another implication, which Schöllgen did not mention explicitly. If, as Schöllgen asserts, the regulations in the document are addressed in response to actual situations, intended to "correct abuses and to address new rules to changed circumstances," then the issues dealt with in the *Didache* will reflect the areas of Christian life in the early church that most urgently needed authoritative regulations.

2.2.3 Tension of Church Ministers

One of the issues of the early church that scholars perceived from the *Didache* is the tension between different authority figures. Niederwimmer describes the "changing circumstances" to which the Didachist responded as those of a church undergoing a process of stabilization.[101] He claims that *Did* 11:4–12, which he

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[99] Georg Schöllgen, "The *Didache* as a Church Order: An Examination of the Purpose for the Composition of the Didache and its Consequences for its Interpretation," in *The Didache in Modern Research*, ed. Jonathan A. Draper (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 63.

[100] One example of argument from silence, which Schöllgen refutes, is Rordorf's claim that the absence of certain elements of the baptismal liturgy indicates that they were unknown to the Didachist. See Willy Rordorf, "Baptism According to the Didache," in *The Didache in Modern Research*, ed. Jonathan A. Draper, AGJU 37 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 221–22.

[101] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 52. Niederwimmer's view on itinerant radicalism shows influence from Theissen. See Gerd Theissen, *The First Followers of Jesus: A Sociological Analysis of the Earliest Christianity* (London: SCMP, 1978). Draper argues that Theissen's view indeed finds its root in Harnack's interpretation of the *Didache*, hence applying Theissen's theory to interpret the *Didache* is a circular argument. See Jonathan A. Draper, "Weber, Theissen, and 'Wandering Charismatics' in the Didache," *JECS* 6 (1998): 541–52. Nevertheless, Niederwimmer's analysis of the itinerant charismatics in the *Didache* has a strong foundation on his own analysis of the text, hence can be viewed in its own regard.

regards as the traditional core of the section on church officials (*Did* 11–15), reflects a time when "itinerant charismatics and local Christians represent two independent forms of Christian existence clearly distinguished from each other," and they were dependent on each other.[102] However, at the time when the *Didache* was composed, the situation had been changed. Local communities were more organized and local leaders were chosen out of their own ranks. Although the phenomenon of itinerant charismatics did not cease, some of them expressed the wish to settle permanently among the local community. These situations caused competitions between the settling charismatics and the local leaders.[103] Hence, the Didachist, from a standpoint of the local Christians, aimed to establish an intelligible relation between the two groups and sought to resolve the tension between them.[104] The Didachist even ordered that local officials are to be honoured as the prophets and teachers (*Did* 15:2).

Niederwimmer's view concurs with Patterson's study.[105] Through analyzing the Coptic version,[106] Patterson arrives at a similar conclusion that the *Didache* "indicates that the relationship between wanderers and the communities which supported them had become problematic," resulting in conflict between itinerant radicals and local communities.[107] He further claims that *Did* 12:2b–13:7, as well as *Did* 15:1–2, reflect an entirely different historical situation, with refugees from Palestine becoming an urgent problem of local Christian communities, apostles having disappeared from the scene, and local officials being firmly established.[108] This goes one step further than Niederwimmer's reconstruction.

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[102] Kurt Niederwimmer, "An Examination of the Development of Itinerant Radicalism in the Environment and Tradition of the Didache," in *The* Didache *in Modern Research*, ed. Jonathan A. Draper (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 328–33.
[103] Ibid., 333–38.
[104] Ibid., 327, 337–38.
[105] Stephen J. Patterson, "*Didache* 11–13: The Legacy of Radical Itinerancy in Early Christianity," in *The* Didache *in Context: Essays on Its Text, History and Transmission*, ed. Clayton N. Jefford, NovTSup 77 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 311–29.
[106] The Coptic version of the *Didache* was discovered in 1923 in Cairo. The papyrus manuscript contains a text covering *Did* 10:3b–12:2a. For a translation and textual commentary of the Coptic version, see F. Stanley Jones and Paul A. Mirecki, "Considerations on the Coptic Papyrus of the *Didache*," in *The* Didache *in Context*, ed. Clayton N. Jefford (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 47–87.
[107] Patterson, "*Didache* 11–13," 324–26.
[108] Ibid., 326–27.

Draper also discusses the problem of church leadership in the *Didache*. Applying Douglas' sociological studies,[109] he describes the *Didache* community as a "witch-believing society", a community with strong group boundaries but ambiguous and undefined roles of leadership.[110] Moreover, utilizing Weber's theory on charisma,[111] he suggests that prophets in the *Didache* represent a new phase in the history of the community. The apostles who were previous source of authority then disappeared.[112] In his view, these prophets were representatives of renewal movements. They were beyond the authority of the established leaders of the community, thus causing conflict between the two groups of leaders.[113] The conflict was further worsened by unworthy occupants of the offices of bishop and deacon.[114] Such conflicts reflect not only struggles over power but also over scarce material resources in the community.[115] Under such situations, the *Didache* sets out rules in an attempt to resolve quarrels among members over community leadership.[116] It affirms the authority of the prophets but at the same time upholds the status of the local authorities.

By contrast, Milavec is more reserved in affirming the leading role of the prophets in the *Didache* community. He agrees with Crossan[117] in regarding the wandering prophets as Christians crushed by "the ruthless pressures of the Roman economic order wherein huge agricultural estates worked by slaves flooded the

[109] Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1973), 77–92.
[110] Jonathan A. Draper, "Social Ambiguity and the Production of Text: Prophets, Teachers, Bishops, and Deacons and the Development of the Jesus Tradition in the Community of the Didache," in *The Didache in Context: Essays on Its Text, History and Transmission*, ed. Clayton N. Jefford (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 285–302.
[111] Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, 3 vol., eds. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (New York: Bedminster Press, 1968).
[112] Draper, "Wandering Charismatics," 570–76.
[113] Ibid., 572. Stewart-Sykes suggests on the contrary that at the time of the *Didache*, no conflict between charismatics and local leaders has appeared. See Alistair Stewart-Sykes, "Prophecy and Patronage: The Relationship between Charismatic Functionaries and Household Officers in Early Christianity," in *Trajectories through the New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers*, eds. Andrew Gregory and Christopher Tuckett (Oxford: OUP, 2005), 182–84.
[114] Draper, "Social Ambiguity," 291–92.
[115] Jonathan A. Draper, "Pure Sacrifice in Didache 14 as Jewish Christian Exegesis," *Neot* 42 (2008): 227–28.
[116] In contrast to van de Sandt, Draper regards *Did* 15:3 as dealing with quarrels over leadership instead of common transgressions in the community. Draper also sees both elements of community reconciliation and judicial process in the passage, while van de Sandt regards the judicial aspect to be absent. See Draper, "Pure Sacrifice," 234–36.
[117] Crossan, *Birth of Christianity*, 330–31.

markets with inexpensive grains which squeezed the already marginal profits available from small family farms."[118] The hardship they experienced made them embrace the Kingdom of God fiercely as the last hope. In his view, the wandering prophets were not leaders of the community and had no essential role in the routines of community life.[119] However, they could pose a threat since they might bring in teachings that oppose the tradition of the community.[120] Therefore the *Didache* only accepts these prophets as long as what they teach is compatible with the *Didache*'s own teachings.

These discussions on the tensions among church ministers highlight the importance of one's portrayal of the early church for the interpretation of the *Didache*, especially *Did* 11–15. Although the details of the reconstructions differ from each other, all these views agree that one can discern some sort of conflict among various authority figures in early church communities. This situation necessitated regulations on these ministers. While any concrete reconstruction of the church leadership structure as witnessed in the *Didache* must remain to a certain extent speculative, more attention can be given on how the instructions in the *Didache* may contribute to stabilizing the early church communities under these conflicts, especially from a perspective of group dynamics and social psychology.

2.2.4 Tension with Judaism

Audet's affirmation of the Jewish origin of the Two Ways tradition highlights the Jewish roots of the *Didache*, and hence brings forth the question of the relation of the early church with its Jewish roots as reflected in this early church order. The most extensive study so far on the Jewish roots of the *Didache* has been undertaken by Flusser and van de Sandt.[121] By tracing the affinities of the Two Ways section in *Did* 1–6 to various Jewish traditions, they claim that the *Didache* is an adaptation of the

[118] Aaron Milavec, "How the Didache Attracted, Cooled Down, and Quenched Prophetic Fire," *Proceedings: EGL & MWBS* 19(1999): 105–12.
[119] Aaron Milavec, "Distinguishing True and False Prophets: The Protective Wisdom of the Didache," *JECS* 2 (1994): 117.
[120] Ibid., 124–25.
[121] See especially Huub van de Sandt and David Flusser, *The Didache: Its Jewish Sources and Its Place in Early Judaism and Christianity*, CRINT 3; JTECL 5 (Assen: Royal Van Gorcum; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002).

Jewish traditions for the need of the Christian community.[122] Dating the document to the turn of the first century CE, they claim that the *Didache* was composed in a time when the church began to define itself as distinct from its roots in Judaism. In such a transitional period, various groups were formed within the Christian community, and a major concern of the Didachist was "to overcome the tension between these groups and movements" and "to safeguard the unity and identity of his community against threats from the inside and outside world," in order to "prevent a seemingly irreversible division within the community."[123] However, they see two opposite strategies in the *Didache* to achieve this goal. On the one hand, in contrast to Paul, the *Didache* promotes the observance of the Jewish Law to the highest degree attainable in order to strengthen the ties between the Jewish and Gentile Christians.[124] The dominant position of the Two Ways section reveals a community that primarily defined itself against the Gentile world by appealing to its Jewish roots.[125] On the other hand, the *Didache* tries to replace Jewish liturgies and practices "with a modified and transformed worship reflecting the liturgical traditions that were maintained by the majority in his own time" in *Did* 7–10.[126] This shows an increased interest in Gentile converts, and a separation of the *Didache* community from the Jews.[127] The text even shows an attitude of animosity towards Jews and Judaism by

[122] Ibid., 55–80, 140–90. See also Joseph Verheyden, "Jewish Christianity, A State of Affairs: Affinities and Differences with Respect to Matthew, James, and the Didache," in *Matthew, James, and Didache: Three Related Documents in Their Jewish and Christian Settings, eds. Huub van de Sandt and Jürgen K. Zangenberg*, (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 128–35. For a more detailed comparison between *Did* 3:1–6 and other Jewish traditions, see Huub van de Sandt, "Didache 3:1-6: A Transformation of an Existing Jewish Hortatory Pattern," *JSJ* 23 (1992): 21–41.

[123] van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 34–35.

[124] Ibid., 265–69. See also David Flusser, "Paul's Jewish-Christian Opponents in the *Didache*," in *The* Didache *in Modern Research*, ed. Jonathan A. Draper (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 195–211 for a more detailed comparison between *Did* 6:2–3 and Paul's view.

[125] van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 58. Van de Sandt further remarks that in the *Didache*, as in Matthew, the ethical obligations for members of their respective communities are defined in remarkably Jewish terms of Torah observance. See Huub van de Sandt, "Essentials of Ethics in Matthew and the Didache: A Comparison at a Conceptual and Practical Level," in *Early Christian Ethics in Interaction with Jewish and Greco-Roman Contexts*, eds. Jan Willem van Henten and Joseph Verheyden, STAR 17 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013), 244.

[126] van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 34.

[127] van de Sandt further elaborates how the ritual regulations in the *Didache* redefine the community's social identity as distinct from Jewish identity. See Huub van de Sandt, "The Didache Redefining Its Jewish Identity in View of Gentiles Joining the Community," in *Empsychoi Logoi—Religious Innovations in Antiquity: Studies in Honour of Pieter Willem van der Horst*, eds. Alberdina Houtman, Albert de Jong and Magda Misset-van de Weg (Leiden: Brill, 2008): 245–65.

calling them "hypocrites".[128] In view of these two seemingly incompatible attitudes, van de Sandt and Flusser assert that the *Didache* cannot be considered as a homogeneous text.[129] Even though each individual part makes up a coherent unity, tensions exist among different parts of the composition. Such an assessment of the *Didache* helps to highlight the various stages of development of the text. However, since the various sections of the *Didache* were put together into one document at a final stage, it is necessary to ask how this final form of the *Didache* may be perceived as a consistent instruction for the faith community, rather than simply accepting that the text is inhomogeneous.

Jefford also regards the *Didache* as a witness to the tension between the early church and its Jewish roots. In contrast to scholars such as Köhler,[130] Wengst[131] and Tuckett,[132] who regard the *Didache* as dependent on Matthew, he suggests that the two documents evolved alongside each other in the Christian community in Antioch.[133] By discerning different redaction layers of the document, he suggests at least three stages of development of the *Didache* community, in which the additions of Christian Gentiles caused a shift from the original Jewish theological orientation. In response to this change, the original collection of Jewish saying materials were transformed into a text for the instruction of catechumens, and finally was relegated to a position of neglect as the original group of Christian Jews demised and the Gospel of Matthew gained prominence within the community.[134] Jefford further suggests that one may discern in the *Didache* an awareness of controversies on issues

[128] van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 291–96. They understand the hypocrites to be referring to the general Jewish community that does not believe in Jesus.
[129] Ibid., 28.
[130] Wolf-Dietrich Köhler, *Die Rezeption des Matthäusevangeliums in der Ziet vor Irenäus*, WUNT 2/24 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1987), 29–30.
[131] Wengst, *Didache*, 24–32.
[132] Christopher M. Tuckett, "Synoptic Tradition in the *Didache*," in *The* Didache *in Modern Research*, ed. Jonathan A. Draper (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 92–128. See also Christopher M. Tuckett, "The Didache and the Synoptics Once More: A Response to Aaron Milavec," *JECS* 13 (2005): 509–18.
[133] For his argument for an Antioch provenance, see Jefford, "Locating," 62–63. Jefford further argues that Ignatius of Antioch knew some earlier form of the *Didache*, though Ignatius did not quote from it. See Clayton N. Jefford, "Did Ignatius of Antioch Know the *Didache*?" in *The* Didache *in Context: Essays on Its Text, History and Transmission*, ed. Clayton N. Jefford, NovTSup 77 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 330–51 and Clayton N. Jefford, "The Milieu of Matthew, the Didache, and Ignatius of Antioch: Agreements and Differences," in *Matthew and the Didache: Two Documents from the Same Jewish-Christian Milieu?* ed. Huub van de Sandt (Assen: Royal Van Gorcum ; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 35–47.
[134] Jefford, *Sayings of Jesus*, 143–45.

such as "table customs" and "the yoke of the Lord", like those witnessed in Acts 15.[135] Great tensions exist among different subgroups within the community around these issues, with the *Didache* representing a group that held more conservatively the Jewish views of Christian faith, while the Gospel of Matthew and the views of Ignatius representing more Gentile-welcoming standpoints.[136] Therefore, the *Didache* can be regarded as a response from this conservative group to the changing conditions and conflicting opinions within the community.

Jefford's discussion about the issue of table fellowship between Jewish and Gentile Christians is developed by Slee, who claims that *Did* 6:2–3 was composed to resolve the disunity and schisms in the Antioch church by allowing Gentiles to enter the church but at the same time reassuring the Jewish Christians that the Torah will not be undermined. However, she stretches the evidence of the text too far when she tries to interpret the concern for church leaders in *Did* 11–15 in light of the problem of table fellowship by suggesting that the conflict between apostolic prophets and local leaders was indeed a conflict between Torah-observant charismatic emissaries from Jerusalem and non-Torah-observant Gentile patrons of the community.[137] Such interpretation can only find very limited support from the text.

Pardee, using a method of text-linguistic analysis, arrives at a similar view as Jefford on the development of the *Didache* community.[138] She asserts that the document particularly reflects the Christianization of the originally Jewish teachings and its adaptation for a Gentile Christian community. According to her reconstruction, the *Didache* indicates the rift between Judaism and Christianity going deeper and more permanent.[139]

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[135] Clayton N. Jefford, "Tradition and Witness in Antioch: Acts 15 and Didache 6," *PRS* 19 (1992): 416–17.
[136] See Jefford, "Milieu," 42–44, and Clayton N. Jefford, "Social Locators as a Bridge between the *Didache* and Matthew," in *Trajectories through the New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers*, eds. Andrew Gregory and Christopher Tuckett (Oxford: OUP, 2005), 256–64. Kloppenborg sees a similar tension between the *Didache* and Paul, but regards Matthew as on the same side of the controversy as the *Didache*. See Kloppenborg, "*Didache* 1.1–6.1," 220–21.
[137] Michelle Slee, *The Church in Antioch in the First Century CE: Communion and Conflict*, JSNTSup 244 (London: Sheffield Academic, 2003), 101–16.
[138] Pardee, *Genre and Development*, 184–86.
[139] Pardee, "Visualizing," 86.

Draper, on the other hand, asserts that the *Didache* has a very positive view of the Torah. He understands the perfectness mentioned in *Did* 6:2 and *Did* 16:2 as referring to the full compliance of the Torah,[140] though interpreted by the Christian community under the influence of the Jesus tradition.[141] Hence he regards the *Didache* to be closer to Pharisaic Judaism than to any other Jewish group.[142] In light of *Did* 16:2, he claims that the *Didache* envisions Gentile converts becoming full Jews in the end in order to attain salvation.[143] He even sees in the *Didache* "great hostility towards Christians who advocate the abolition of the Torah,"[144] and suggests that the false apostle reproached in the *Didache* could be Paul.[145] On the other hand, he observes that the *Didache* shows flexibility on the observation of the Torah by Gentile Christians, since it offers a minimum level of Torah observance appropriate to Gentiles.[146] It is possible that this flexibility caused attacks from the Pharisees in a later stage of the community's development. Hence in *Did* 8, these opponents of the community are reproached as "hypocrites", and community members are required to separate themselves from this group.[147] However, in contrast to the view of van de Sandt, he maintains that this does not mean an irrevocable parting of the ways with Judaism. Instead, following Weinfeld's view on the use of the term "hypocrite",[148] he

[140] Draper, "Social Ambiguity," 290. See also Jonathan A. Draper, "A Continuing Enigma: The 'Yoke of the Lord' in *Didache* 6:1–3 as a Key to Understanding Jewish-Christian Relations in Early Christianity," in *The Image of Judaeo-Christians in Ancient Jewish and Christian Literature*, ed. Peter J. Tomson (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 106–23.
[141] Jonathan A. Draper, "Torah and Troublesome Apostles in the *Didache* Community," in *The* Didache *in Modern Research*, ed. Jonathan A. Draper (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 354.
[142] Jonathan A. Draper, "A Commentary on the Didache in the Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Documents," (PhD dissertation, Cambridge Universy, 1983), 329.
[143] Draper, "Troublesome Apostles," 359.
[144] Ibid., 352. Here Draper is referring to the rejection of false teacher in *Did* 11:2, though it is not straightforward to see great hostility in that passage. See also Draper, "Social Ambiguity," 294–95.
[145] Draper, "Troublesome Apostles," 363.
[146] Jonathan A. Draper, "The Two Ways and Eschatological Hope: A Contested Terrain in Galatians 5 and the Didache," *Neot* 45 (2011): 232. Tomson and Del Verme also understand the hypocrites to be referring to Pharisees. See Peter J. Tomson, "The Wars against Rome, the Rise of Rabbinic Judaism and of Apostolic Gentile Christianity, and the Judaeo-Christians; Elements for a Synthesis," in *The Image of Judaeo-Christians in Ancient Jewish and Christian Literature*, ed. Peter J. Tomson (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 9–10, Peter J. Tomson, "The Halakhic Evidence of Didache 8 and Matthew 6 and the Didache Community's Relationship to Judaism," in *Matthew and Didache: Two Documents from the Same Jewish-Christian Milieu?* ed. Huub van de Sandt (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 131–41 and Marcello Del Verme, *Didache and Judaism: Jewish Roots of an Ancient Christian-Jewish Work* (New York; London: T&T Clark, 2004), 185.
[147] Jonathan A. Draper, "Christian Self-Definition against the 'Hypocrites' in *Didache* 8," in *The* Didache *in Modern Research*, ed. Jonathan A. Draper (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 230.
[148] Moshe Weinfeld, "The Charge of Hypocrisy in Matthew 23 and in Jewish Sources," *Immanuel* 24/25 (1990): 52–58.

understands the dispute as an "inner Jewish debate",[149] that indicates the *Didache* community still regarded itself as closely related to the larger Jewish community.

These differing views on the *Didache*'s position on the Jewish-Gentile relation indicate the complexity of the problem. As part of the analysis of the community situation and rhetoric strategy of the *Didache*, this study tries to give further discussions on this issue and offers its own position. It will be argued that the *Didache* does not envision Gentile Christians becoming fully Torah observant, but portrays certain groups of Jews as outsiders in its effort to reinforce the solidarity of the faith community.[150]

The tension experienced by the *Didache* community with the pagan world on the one hand and other Jewish groups on the other makes it an urgent need to provide a new and strong social identity for this community. The Two Ways teaching in *Did* 1–6 cuts the Gentile converts from their previous social identity in the pagan society,[151] reinforcing "the social death or separation which is required of the convert in the initiation process before there can be a rebirth."[152] Then, the rituals in *Did* 7–10 help to give the convert a new identity,[153] which is understood as a temple in which God's holy Name was dwelling.[154] On the other hand, with regard to the tension with other Jewish groups, Draper asserts that the teaching about fasting and prayer in *Did* 8 intends to create a public differentiation between the *Didache* community and the Pharisaic Jews, thus highlighting the unique identity of the *Didache* community.[155] Therefore, the *Didache* could fulfill the function of identity formation and consolidate the early Christian community.

[149] Jonathan A. Draper, "Do the Didache and Matthew Reflect an 'Irrevocable Parting of the Ways' with Judaism?" in *Matthew and the Didache: Two Documents from the Same Jewish-Christian Milieu?* ed. Huub van de Sandt (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 230.
[150] See especially sections 6.1.4 and 6.2.4 below.
[151] Draper, "Christian Self-Definition," 228.
[152] Jonathan A. Draper, "Barnabas and the Riddle of the Didache Revisited," *JSNT* 58 (1995): 96.
[153] Draper, "Ritual Process," 153.
[154] Draper, "Pure Sacrifice," 247.
[155] Draper, "Christian Self-Definition," 234–38.

2.2.5 Economic Tensions

Another aspect of the *Didache* that has attracted scholarly interest is the organization of community life in the early church. In this respect, Milavec suggests that the *Didache* as a "comprehensive, step-by-step, program used for the formation of a gentile convert."[156] Such an understanding of the nature of the *Didache* is also echoed in O'Loughlin's interpretation of the *Didache* in light of apprenticeship.[157] With such an understanding of the nature of the document, Milavec depicts the *Didache* community as a kind of "mutual aid society".[158] A new set of spiritual and commercial alliances is established for the new converts to replace those they have lost. This is done partly by encouraging sharing of one's resources with members of the community (*Did* 4:5–8) in imitation of God's freely giving.[159] He further suggests that the purpose of these exhortations is to build "an economic safety net which safeguarded the small family-owned-and-operated businesses from the menacing economic conditions within first-century society."[160] While these suggestions are stimulating, one cannot help but feel that Milavec's portrayal of the *Didache* community stretches the evidence of the text too far. In particular, little in the text supports the idea that the *Didache* community was so economically well-established to be able to maintain "family businesses" in an almost self-sufficient way, as Milavec seems to suggest. Moreover, Milavec's assessment of the *Didache* has overlooked the selective nature of the document's instructions observed by Schöllgen. It is unlikely that the *Didache* sought to establish a comprehensive social system for the community.

Taking up Milavec's discussion on the economy of the *Didache* community and Moxnes'[161] study on the economy in Luke's Gospel, Draper also examines the

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[156] Aaron Milavec, *The Didache: Text, Translation, Analysis, and Commentary* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2003), 87.
[157] Thomas O'Loughlin, *The* Didache*: A Window on the Earliest Christians* (London: SPCK, 2010), 10–13.
[158] Aaron Milavec, "The Economic Safety Net in the Didache Community," *Proceedings: EGL & MWBS* 16 (1996): 77–78.
[159] Milavec, "Economic Safety Net," 78–82. See also Aaron Milavec, "When, Why, and for Whom Was the Didache Created? Insights into the Social and Historical Setting of the Didache Communities," in *Matthew and Didache: Two Documents from the Same Jewish-Christian Milieu?* ed. Huub van de Sandt (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 71–72.
[160] Milavec, "Economic Safety Net," 73.
[161] Moxnes, *Economy of the Kingdom*.

economical significance of the *Didache*. He concludes that the "moral economy" suggested in the *Didache* "functions as an alternative economy to the exploitative and oppressive patron-client networks of the ancient Roman Empire."[162] In particular, it exhorts community members to practice "generalized reciprocity", that is, altruistic exchange or giving pure gifts.[163] Such commands promote redistribution of resources in the community, thus strengthening social bonding.[164] It may be noted that Draper's view on the economic perspectives of the *Didache* is comparable to those studies on James that stresses the social injustice confronted by James, especially Batten's study that compares James with the patron-client system. It would not be surprising that both documents have similar attitudes toward the economic system of the larger society, given that they were situated in similar social backgrounds and shares common Jewish traditions of moral teaching.

2.2.6 Community Conflict in the *Didache*

Van de Sandt observes yet another community issue in the *Didache*, namely, the disputes among community members. In discussing the quotation of the Lord's word in *Did* 9:5, "give not that which is holy to the dogs," he points to the traditional Jewish teachings that protect the holy offerings to God to be polluted.[165] He then infers from *Did* 14 that disputes among community members are regarded as a defilement of the Eucharist, and hence warring Christians are to be excluded from the Eucharist (*Did* 14:2) like those who have not been baptized (*Did* 9:5).[166] Moreover, he observes that the *Didache* displays a striking concern for reconciliation of offenders. In *Did* 15:3, members of the community are exhorted to correct one another in peace. In a similar manner to the instructions contained in Matt 18, *Did* 15:3 seeks to gain a brother by inducing him to admit and repent his sin. However,

[162] Jonathan A. Draper, "The Moral Economy of the *Didache*," *HvTSt Teologiese Studies* 67/1 (2011): 9.
[163] Draper, "Moral Economy," 4–6. A further analysis of the socio-economic perspective of the *Didache* is given in Jonathan A. Draper, "Children and Slaves in the Community of the Didache and the Two Ways Tradition," in *The Didache: A Missing Piece of the Puzzle in Early Christianity*, eds. J.A. Draper and C.N. Jefford, ECIL 14 (Atlanta: SBL, 2015), 85–121.
[164] Ibid., 4.
[165] Huub van de Sandt, "'Do Not Give What is Holy to the Dogs' (Did 9:5D and Matt 7:6A): The Eucharistic Food of the Didache in Its Jewish Purity Setting," *VC* 56 (2002): 223–46. See also Huub van de Sandt, "Why does the Didache Conceive of the Eucharist as a Holy Meal?" *VC* 65 (2011): 1–20.
[166] van de Sandt, "Do Not Give," 243.

the teaching in the *Didache* seems to lack the legal connotation of the passage Matt 18:15–17, which van de Sandt regards as traditional material that Matthew incorporated into the wider context of Matt 18.[167] These observations suggest that the harmony of the community is an important concern of the *Didache*. In order to deal with conflict among community members, the *Didache* on the one hand stresses the defiling effect of such warring, while on the other hand it adopts Jewish traditions of reproof in a revised form to enhance reconciliation between disputing members.

2.2.7 Conclusion

It is obvious that the *Didache* was produced to regulate the life and practices of some early Christian communities. It is natural to ask what kind of situation of the early church caused the production of this "church order". Previous works have already identified some community tensions reflected in the *Didache*. The most discussed aspects include the Jewish-Gentile relation, the attitude toward the Torah, economic tensions, and the conflict among leaders or officials of the community. Moreover, some social-scientific theories have been applied to offer fruitful insights into the milieu of the *Didache*. However, besides Milavec's suggestion that the *Didache* is a comprehensive training menu for converts, not many attempts have been made to explore the cohesiveness of the whole document as well as the social functions it might have played in the early Christian communities. Discussions are on-going. More work can be done to investigate the social dynamic of the early Christian communities witnessed in it, by considering both the evidence in the text itself and the insights provided by sociological studies on group behaviour. Base on the above insights of previous studies, the following study will try to further analyze the community tensions witnessed in the *Didache,* as well as the possible effects the rhetoric strategies of this document may create towards the reduction of these tensions. This will also shed light on the coherence of the *Didache* by illustrating that the various parts of the document serve the common purpose of maintaining the solidarity of early believers.

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[167] Huub van de Sandt, "Two Windows on a Developing Jewish-Christian Reproof Practice: Matt 18:15–17 and *Did* 15:3," in *Matthew and the Didache: Two Documents from the Same Jewish-Christian Milieu?* ed. Huub van de Sandt (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 178–80. However, Draper observes that the consequences of the reproof in the *Didache* could be exclusion from the community. This implies a judicial process. See Draper, "Pure Sacrifice," 237.

Chapter 3
Community Conflicts Reflected in James

Some scholars have already observed that there are community conflicts reflected in James.[1] However, a more comprehensive analysis of the conflict situations in James is still lacking. In this chapter, exegetical issues surrounding several key passages that reveal possible community strife will be considered to show that intra-communal conflict forms one of the main concerns of James. Results from social-scientific studies on group dynamics will be applied in order to illuminate the community situations in the letter's concern. By investigating the possible community conflicts reflected in James, it would become conceivable that one of the main purposes of this letter is to resolve these tensions and maintain the solidarity of the community of believers. However, before considering individual passages, a brief discussion on the epistolary nature and the initial audience of the letter must be made.

3.1 James as a Letter

Although the opening of James clearly shows an epistolary form, the epistolary nature of the whole book has been questioned. Dibelius rejects to view James as a letter since there seems to be no continuity of thought in the writing.[2] Moreover, the content of James does not seem to be addressing situational issues of a particular recipient group. Hence, many scholars claim that James is a writing of some non-epistolary genre carried in a letter form.[3]

[1] See for example Davids, *James*, 135–70. Smit, following Frankemölle's view, also holds that James' audience was divided among themselves, as individuals and as congregations, thus experiencing tensions and conflict. See D.J. Smit, "Exegesis and Proclamation: 'Show no partiality ...' (James 2:1-13)," *JTSA* 71 (1990): 60 and Hubert Frankemölle, "Gespalten oder ganz. Zur Pragmatik der theologischen Anthropologie des Jakobusbriefes," in *Kommunikation und Solidarität*, eds. Hans-Ulrich von Brachel, Norbert Mette (Münster Freiburg: Edition Liberación, 1985), 164–65.

[2] Dibelius, *James*, 1–2. See also S. R. Llewelyn, "The Prescript of James," *NovT* 39 (1997): 385–93, where Llewelyn argues that the opening address of Jas 1:1 is a latter addition.

[3] Stowers, *Letter Writting*, 15–47, James L. Bailey and Lyle D. Vander Broek, *Literary Forms in the New Testament* (Louisville, Ky.: WJKP, 1992), 199–201, Luke T. Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 455, and David E. Aune, *The New Testament in Its Literary Environment*, LEC 8 (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1987), 158–59.

In recent decades, however, scholars have called for a reconsideration of the epistolary nature of James. Bauckham observes that the issue is to be approached at two levels. First, the form of James is analyzed to see whether it conforms to conventions of a letter. Second, the function of James is investigated to see whether it functions as a real letter, addressing a definite group of recipients.[4] For the first aspect, Francis makes an important contribution in his study of the Hellenistic letter forms. He identifies features in the opening and the closing sections of James that resembles epistles in the Hellenistic period.[5] On the other hand, it is asserted that James resembles the Jewish diaspora letters, which is written from a central religious authority to geographically remote communities, usually with the intent of encouraging them not to assimilate culturally to the world that surrounds them.[6] Thus, there is a strong case that formally speaking, James should not be disqualified as a letter.

However, the fact that James is formally a letter does not necessarily imply that it functions as a real letter in the sense that it deals with real situational issues of the audience. For example, Bauckham classifies James as a paraenetic encyclical to the diaspora, which means that James "is unlikely to have been occasioned by any specific exigencies. ... The teaching James provides does not meet the needs of a particular moment. It is the teaching the Jewish Christians of the Diaspora might need at any time."[7] Nevertheless, as Penner asserts, "if one does believe that James represents an actual letter, then there now must be—ipso facto—'senders' and 'receivers'. Consequently, a situational context—albeit still vague and rudimentary—is necessarily implied."[8] Indeed, the argument that James is a text of other genre carried by the form of a letter can be turned around. It is possible that James is written with some literary conventions, be that Hellenistic paraenesis, Jewish diaspora letter, Jewish wisdom instruction, or something else, in order to address the

[4] Bauckham, *James*, 12. See also Lockett, *Purity and Worldview*, 66–70.
[5] Fred O. Francis, "The Form and Function of the Opening and Closing Paragraphs of James and 1 John," *ZNW* 61 (1970): 111–21.
[6] Verseput, "Genre and Story," 100–104, Manabu Tsuji, *Glaube zwischen Vollkommenheit und Verweltlichung: Eine Untersuchung zur literarischen Gestalt und zur inhaltlichen Kohärenz des Jakobusbriefes*, WUNT 2/93 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1997), 18–37.
[7] Bauckham, *James*, 27–28.
[8] Penner, "Current Research," 267.

situational issues of its initial audience.[9] Even though James is written for a broad audience, it still could have in view some concrete community problems.[10] Therefore, it is plausible that James is not only formally a letter, but actually functions as a real letter.

3.2 Initial Audience of James

James addresses its recipients as "the twelve tribes in the diaspora" (ταῖς δώδεκα φυλαῖς ταῖς ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ). There are two main interpretations of this phrase. The first interprets the phrase symbolically.[11] It takes "the twelve tribes" as a metaphorical reference to the church as a whole which includes both Jewish and Gentile Christians, regarding the church as "the true Israel" (cf. Rom 9). It also understands "the diaspora" as the spiritual dispersion which refers to the Christians' life on this earth with the hardships they have to endure. The other interpretation takes the phrase literally, regarding "the twelve tribes" as a reference to the Jewish race and "the diaspora" as the places away from the promised land. For commentators holding this latter view, many regard the letter as a correspondence addressed to Jewish Christian communities.[12] A detailed discussion of the evidence for these options cannot be given here. However, in light of the perceived strong Jewish character of the letter,[13] the latter position seems to be more likely.

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[9] Scholars have observed that James shows a central focus among its various themes, and has a clear objective, aiming at the social formation of its audience. See Patrick J. Hartin, "The Letter of James: Its Vision, Ethics, and Ethos," in *Identity, Ethics, and Ethos in the New Testament*, ed. Jan G. van der Watt, BZNW 141 (Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2006), 447–48 and Perdue, "Social Character," 23–27.

[10] Martin Vahrenhorst, "The Presence and Absence of a Prohibition of Oath in James, Matthew, and the Didache and Its Significance for Contextualization," in *Matthew, James, and Didache*, 376, Allison, *James*, 75–76, Hartin, *James*, 25, William F. Brosend II, *James and Jude*, NCBC (Cambridge:University Press, 2004), 9.

[11] Ropes, *James*, 118–27, Dibelius, *James*, 66–67, Robert W. Wall, *Community of the Wise: The Letter of James*, NTIC (Vally Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1997), 12–13, Edgar, *Has God Not Chosen*, 97–101.

[12] See for example Scot McKnight, *The Letter of James*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 67–68, Luke T. Johnson, *The Letter of James*, AB 37A (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 170–71, Davids, *James*, 64, Moo, *James*, 23–24.

[13] Patrick J. Hartin, *James*, SPS 14 (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2003), 27. Evidence of Jewish background mentioned by Hartin include the upholding of the Torah, the reference of Abraham as "our father", the apparent familiarity of the audience with the traditional figures of Israel, the reference to God by the title "Lord of Hosts", and the reference of the assembling place as "synagogue". See also Serge Ruzer, "James on Faith and Righteousness in the Context of a Broader Jewish Exegetical Discourse," in *New Approaches to the Study of Biblical Interpretation in Judaism of the Second Temple Period and in Early Christianity*, eds. Gary A. Anderson et. al., STDJ 106 (Leiden: Brill:

No matter whether the opening address is interpreted literally or metaphorically, the phrase "the twelve tribes in the diaspora" conveys a strong eschatological sense, since it signifies the reunion of all the people of Israel as promised in the prophets.[14] The audience is reminded of their identity as the eschatological people of God. While they are struggling with the hardships in their situations in the diaspora, they have the hope that the final fulfillment of God's promise is near, and they are part of that final fulfillment. With this basic depiction of the initial audience, the following discussion will try to investigate the possible community tensions that induced the production of the letter of James.

3.3 Wars and Fightings in the Community (Jas 4:1–3)

This investigation will begin with the passage in James where conflicts among believers are stated most obviously and in most serious terms, namely, Jas 4:1–3. Varner suggests that 4:1–10 is the "hortatory peak" of the letter.[15] This would imply that the community situation reflected in this passage is what the author of James concerned most for his audience. In this passage, the author clearly indicates that there are wars and fightings (πόλεμοι καὶ μάχαι) among the audience. However, commentators differ radically on the meaning of these three verses. Wischmeyer is among those who strongly object to the suggestion that these words reflect actual conflicts. She asserts that Jas 4:1 "belongs to a specific ethical discourse and … does not reflect actual parties or conflicts within a specific Christian community."[16] Johnson also argues that James here is using the Hellenistic *topos* of envy to further elaborate the theme of true and false wisdom in 3:13–18. According to Johnson, the appearance of these words reveals not so much the supposed activities of the

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2013), 79–104. However, Niehoff argues on the contrary that Jewish perspectives and exegetical traditions are missing in James. See Maren R. Niehoff, "The Implied Audience of the Letter of James," in *New Approaches to the Study of Biblical Interpretation in Judaism of the Second Temple Period and in Early Christianity*, eds. Gary A. Anderson, Ruth A. Clements and David Satran, STDJ 106 (Leiden: Brill: 2013), 57–77.

[14] See Todd C. Penner, *The Epistle of James and Eschatology: Re-reading an Ancient Christian Letter*, JSNTSup 121 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 181–83 and Patrick J. Hartin, "Ethics in the Letter of James, the Gospel of Matthew, and the Didache: Their Place in Early Christian Literature," in *Mathew, James, and Didache*, eds. Huub van de Sandt and Jürgen K. Zangenberg (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 290–92.

[15] Varner, "Main Theme and Structure," 128.

[16] Oda Wischmeyer, "Reconstructing the Social and Religious Milieu of James: Methods, Sources, and Possible Results," in *Mathew, James, and Didache: Three Related Documents in Their Jewish and Christian Settings*, eds. Huub van de Sandt and Jürgen K. Zangenberg (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 35.

audience, but the logic of the argument itself.[17] While acknowledging that the wars and fightings refer to real conflicts, Rendall nevertheless asserts that the words "are not applicable to the disagreements and quarrels of a congregation: they refer to the fierce and murderous affrays, the 'wars and battles' of rival religious factions with which the *Antiquities* and *Jewish War* of Josephs are filled."[18] Taking the opposite approach, some commentators hold a very literal understanding of the terms and argue that they refer to zealot activities among the audience.[19] In response to the view of Wischmeyer and Johnson, it should be noted that the way James puts the question presents the wars and fightings as already there, and the audience is left only to answer to their origin.[20] The phrase ἐν ὑμῖν (4:1) also gives a sense of actual situations among the audience instead of a general discussion on a Hellenistic *topos*.[21] Moreover, as Lockett suggests, "that material [in James] has been selected, shaped, and fitted together in a particular order leads one to believe that the author of the composition had an overall persuasive goal in mind."[22] Thus, the fact that the author chooses to address the issue of wars and fightings in the letter suggests that he regards it to be pressing for the audience. Therefore it is more likely that James "refers not to a potential, but to an actual, real and tangible situation. Severe violence is already in evidence among them."[23] Against the opinion that sees zealot activities behind the passage, Allison gives a strong argument:

> (i) no other pericope in James refers to literal war; (ii) 4:1–2 is flanked by passages — 3:1–18 and 4:11–12 — whose focus is communal strife; ... (iii)

[17] Johnson, *James*, 276.
[18] Gerald H. Rendall, *The Epistle of St. James and Judaic Christianity* (Cambridge:University Press, 1927), 30–31. This view is also expressed in Ralph P. Martin, *James*, WBC 48 (Waco: Word Books: 1988), 146 and Jeen Ho Ahn, "Social Justice in the Epistle of James" (PhD dissertation, Durham University, 2001), 37.
[19] So Reicke, *James*, 45–46, Michael J. Townsend, "James 4:1–4: A Warning against Zealotry?" *ExpT* 87 (1976): 212–13 and Jim Reiher, "Violent Language—A Clue to the Historical Occasion of James," *EQ* 85.3 (2013): 238–41.
[20] Brosend, *James and Jude*, 106.
[21] Ropes, *James*, 253, Lockett, *Purity and Worldview*, 156–57.
[22] Darian R. Lockett, "Structure or Communicative Strategy? The 'Two Ways' Motif in James' Theological Instruction," *Neot* 42.2 (2008): 271.
[23] Huub van de Sandt, "Law and Ethics in Matthew's Antitheses and James's Letter: A Reorientation of Halakah in Line with the Jewish Two Ways 3:1–7," in *Mathew, James, and Didache*, eds. Huub van de Sandt and Jürgen K. Zangenberg, (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 337. He notes that James deviates from the conventional topic by suggesting that these battles are being fought just then by his readers. Interestingly, this comment is in contrary to his view in another article, where he claims that Jas 4:1–4 does not seem to respond to the specific problems and needs of a particular community. See Huub van de Sandt, "James 4:1-4 in the Light of the Jewish Two Ways Tradition 3:1-6," *Bib* 88/1 (2007): 40.

> πόλεμος parallels μάχη, and according to BAGD, s.v., the latter occurs in early Christian literature "only of battles fought without actual weapons,"; (iv) ἐν ὑμῖν ... would be odd with reference to literal war; and (v) πόλεμος often designates social conflict or private quarrels.[24]

To these may be added that the reference to zealot activity can hardly make sense of the mention of pleasure (ἡδονή) in 4:3.[25] Contrary to these two approaches, many commentators understood the wars and fightings in Jas 4:1 as non-military personal quarrels, referring to inner-community conflicts among the audience.[26]

Another harsh term James uses to describe the conflict situation is "murder" (φονεύω) in 4:2. Except for those who see zealot activity in the background, scholars usually find it hard to imagine actual murders to be happening among believers.[27] That is why many commentators accept Erasmus' suggestion that instead of φονεύετε (you kill), an original φθονεῖτε (you are envious) stood in the text.[28] However, this conjecture has no textual evidence. Other commentators try to resolve the difficulty by taking the word figuratively.[29] In fact, the term fits well with the theme of envy in Jas 4:1–3, since killing and envy are often connected in contemporary writings,[30] as well as vice lists of the NT (Mk 7:22; Rom 1:29). It describes in hyperbolic terms the hostilities between members of the audience, and conveys the evil intention within them, even to the extent that they desire the death of their opponents.[31] Moreover, social-scientific studies have pointed out that resorting to violence is one of the most

[24] Allison, *James*, 597.
[25] While this word in 4:1 could be interpreted as a desire for war, its occurrence in 4:3, coupled with the verb "spend" (δαπανάω), most likely means illicit sensual pleasure. See McCartney, *James*, 207. Contra Townsend, "James 4:1–4," 213.
[26] Davids, *James*, 156. See also Laws, *James*, 170, Adamson, *James*, 166, Ropes, *James*, 252–53, Fenton J. A. Hort, *The Epistle of St James* (London: Macmillan, 1909), 88.
[27] One exception is McKnight. While he sees Jas 4:1–3 as addressing conflicts among teachers of the Christian communities, he nevertheless accepts a literal interpretation of the word "murder" and ascertain "the possibility that murder was how some Christians 'settled' disputes." See McKnight, *James*, 326–27.
[28] Dibelius, *James*, 217–18, Hans Windisch and Herbert Preisker, *Die Katholischen Brief*, HNT 15 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1951), 27, Adamson, *James*, 167–68, Allison, *James*, 602–3.
[29] See for example Davids, *James*, 158–59 and McCartney, *James*, 207.
[30] For example, Sir 28:17, 21; *Test. Gad* 4:6, *Did*. 3:2; 1 Clem. 3:4–6:3. See Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 178–79 and Davids, *James*, 158.
[31] Here one may discern an allusion to Matt 5:21–22. Though Moo, *James*, 184 objects that "nothing in James' context prepares us for such an interpretation," this interpretation indeed fits well with James' practice of alluding to Jesus' teaching without explicitly indicating it.

salient signs of conflict escalation.[32] Hence, James' description of the audience here may reflect some escalated conflicts among the community.

However, James' concern here is not only the external expression of conflicts, but also the internal corruption of believers that leads to such conflicts.[33] Davids observes that ἡδονή, in 4:1 and 4:3 form an *inclusio* that neatly closes 4:1–3 as a unit.[34] This *inclusio*, together with the terms ἐπιθυμέω and ζηλόω, connects the wars and fightings of the audience closely with the evil motives inside them.[35] This shows an awareness of the interconnection between internal dividedness of believers and explicit conflicts in the community: Envy within oneself causes a person to focus on the quality or things he or she does not possess, and this in turn leads that person to perceive others as rivals.[36] Such an interconnection is seen more clearly in the phrase τῶν στρατευομένων ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ὑμῶν (that are making war in your members). While some regards μέλος here as referring to the ranks of the members of the church,[37] many commentators regard the term as referring to parts of the human body.[38] This latter interpretation stresses the idea that the drive for wrongful pleasure is rooted in the human body, a common thought in both Greek and Jewish traditions in antiquity.[39] For James, conflicts in the faith community are not only external issues such as imbalance of power or difference in opinions, but are direct indicators of the problems of the inner lives of believers, their desire for sinful pleasure.

Here models from social-scientific studies may help to give a more comprehensive understanding of the conflict situation. Korsgaard and his colleagues

[32] Guy Elcheroth and Dario Spini, "Political violence, Intergroup Conflict, and Ethnic Categories," in *Intergroup Conflicts and Their Resolution: A Social Psychological Perspective*, ed. Daniel Bar-Tal (New York: Psychology Press, 2011), 175–94.
[33] David S. Dockery, "True Piety in James: Ethical Admonitions and Theological Implications," *CTR* 1.1 (1986): 62.
[34] Davids, *James*, 160.
[35] Walter T. Wilson, "Sin as Sex and Sex with Sin: The Anthropology of James 1:12–15," *HTR* 95 (2002): 161.
[36] Craig Kubias, "Jealousy: The Dark Side of Love and the Contemplative Prayer Tradition," *Studies in Spirituality* 12 (2000): 230.
[37] Martin, 145. See also Ropes, *James*, 253 and Edwin C. Blackman, *The Epistle of James: Introduction and Commentary*, TBC (London: SCMP, 1957), 124, Strange, *Moral World*, 26, McKnight, *James*, 323–24.
[38] So Davids, *James*, 157, Laws, *James*, 168.
[39] Allison, *James*, 600.

proposed a multilevel model of intragroup conflict. The model states that conflicts develop in four steps: inputs; behaviour; sense making; and conflict.[40] Conflict inputs include personal differences, task incompatibility, and social contexts. These inputs may provoke anti-social behaviours, from which a set of reasons for the conflict has to be constructed. If the contexts and behaviours are perceived negatively, then conflict occurs. These four steps happen simultaneously on individual, dyadic, and group levels, with complex interactions which include both bottom-up and top-down relations between each level.[41] With this framework, one can further analyze how James presents the conflicts among the audience in 4:1–3.

In this passage, James identifies the main conflict input as the audience's desire for pleasure. In a group context, when each individual strives for one's own pleasure, these individual tasks can become incompatible with each other. This is especially the case within an environment of limited good.[42] Thus, competition arises among group members and envy of other people's possessions, either material goods or status, easily springs from this competitive environment. This is especially the case in groups with close interactions, such as the early church.[43] Such competitions and envy then provoke antagonistic behaviours between members, described as in Jas 4:1–3 as wars, fightings, and even murders. These are not only behaviours between individuals, but in the context of high group interdependence such as the early church, such interactions would escalate into a collective problem, and induce other members to engage in similar behavior.[44] When these interactions occurs, members of the group are likely to perceive others as potential competitors or even enemies, regarding actions of others as personally directed at them and ascribing sinister motives to others.[45] The negative perceptions of other group members further worsen

[40] Korsgaard et al., "Multilevel," 1227
[41] Ibid., 1229–43.
[42] Malina, *New Testament World*, 81–107. See also George M. Foster, "Peasant Society and the Image of Limited Good," in *Peasant Society: A Reader*, eds. Jack M. Potter et. al., LBSA (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967), 304–10.
[43] Malina, *New Testament World*, 108–33. See also Angela Y. Kim, "Cain and Abel in the Light of Envy: A Study in the History of the Interpretation of Envy in Genesis 4:1–16," *JSP* 12.1 (2001): 68–69.
[44] Korsgaard et al., "Multilevel," 1241–42.
[45] Ibid., 1231. See also Roderick M. Kramer, "Paranoid Cognition in Social Systems: Thinking and Acting in the Shadow of Doubt," *PSPR* 2/4 (1998): 251–75.

the relations among members of the group, and fuel up the conflicts among James' audience.[46]

Although James has not spelt out all of these group dynamics in detail, the author's description of the audience in 4:1–3 fits the conflict dynamics suggested by social-scientific models.[47] However, it should be remarked that in this passage James' focus on the desire for pleasure as the conflict input, without mentioning the social contexts. This latter factor of conflict input has to be supplied from other passages of James.

3.4 Conflicts among Teachers

The next passage to be considered is Jas 3. The connection between Jas 3 and Jas 4 has long been noted. Based on thematic and rhetorical coherence, Johnson has argued for the unity of Jas 3:13–4:10.[48] Davids groups the whole of Jas 3:1–4:12 under the topic of pure speech.[49] Besides structural and formal perspectives, the themes of teachers, speech, and wisdom in Jas 3 has a close connection with Jas 4:1–10, as will be shown in the following discussion. While Dibelius correctly observes that Jas 3 adopts much traditional material, one need not follow his conclusion that the author is only transmitting school material from a diversity of traditions in an unstructured way.[50] Rather, as Davids maintains, "the redactor wishes this section to be read as a unity."[51] The aim of the following discussion is to investigate how the several themes in Jas 3 are connected to each other and to the wars and fightings in

[46] Roderick M. Kramer, "Organizational Paranoia: Origins and Dynamics," *ROB* 23 (2001): 1-42.
[47] That early Christian congregations, like other communities, have to deal with tensions between its members which sometimes find expression in anger and strife, can be shown by the widespread sayings concerning aversion of anger in biblical, Jewish, and Pagan literatures. See Donald J. Verseput, "James 1:19–27: Anger in the Congregation," in *Interpreting the New Testament Text: Introduction to the Art and Science of Exegesis*, eds. Darrell L. Bock and Buist M. Fanning (Wheaton: Crossways, 2006), 432–33.
[48] See Johnson, *James*, 268–69 and Luke T. Johnson, "James 3:13–4:10 and the Topos περὶ φθόνου," *NovT* 25 (1983): 332–47. See also Moo, *James*, 167–68, Martin, *James*, 141–42, Hartin, *James*, 203–7.
[49] Davids, *James*, 135–70.
[50] Dibelius, *James*, 182. Popkes asserts that James' relying heavily on sources does not mean that the progress of thought in the letter is bound by these sources. Rather, the sources are incorporated to meet the author's own agenda. See Wiard Popkes, "The Composition of James and Intertextuality: An Exercise in Methodology," *ST* 51 (1997): 106.
[51] Davids, *James*, 135.

Jas 4. This will give a more comprehensive picture of the conflict situations among the letter's audience.

3.4.1 Teachers and Sins of the Tongue (Jas 3:1–12)

Jas 3 begins with the admonition: "Not many of you should become teachers" (Μὴ πολλοὶ διδάσκαλοι γίνεσθε). This leads Ropes to suggest that the whole of Jas 3, consisting of "directions for leaders", is addressed to teachers among the audience.[52] His view is correctly criticized, since the verb "become" (γίνομαι) shows that the author has in mind also those who are not teachers but want to be.[53] Moreover, the discussion on speech in 3:2–12 is so general that it is most likely addressed to the whole community. Yet this latter argument raises another problem, that is the relation between 3:1 and 3:2–12. For Dibelius, the admonition in 3:1 has a clearly recognizable distance from the treatise that follows.[54] However, a specific focus on the position of teacher and a general admonition on speech need not indicate a discontinuity in thought, since it is conceivable that "though James never explicitly mentions teachers in [3:2] it is a fair inference that he has them in mind both here and throughout the chapter."[55] Indeed, the author may well be addressing all the members of the community, yet with those teachers and would-be teachers particularly in view.

The issue addressed in 3:1 is clear, namely, too many members among the audience wish to be teachers. Here James is probably addressing the immediate situation in the church.[56] Sociological and anthropological studies indicate that status is one of the basic interests of individuals, and the psychological process which cause men to need a basic degree of respect also creates a demand for more.[57] In particular, organizational office and other institutionalized roles, including those in the realm of religion, can be an effective means to satisfy one's need of respect as well as other

[52] Ropes, *James*, 226, Adamson, *James*, 140.
[53] Allison, *James*, 519. Allison also raised other points of argument against Ropes' view, including the introductory address "my brothers", the history of interpretation of the verse, and a comparison to Mt 10.
[54] Dibelius, *James*, 181–82.
[55] Martin, *James*, 109.
[56] Ibid., 107.
[57] Gerhard E. Lenski, *Power and Privilege: A Theory of Social Stratification* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1984), 37–38.

desires.[58] Hence, it is a common phenomenon that members of a society struggle and compete with each other to gain higher status. No matter the conflict of interest is real or only perceived, such competition would produce a sense of opposition, leading to conflict.[59]

However, the problem is not only the quantity of teachers, but their qualities. What James concerned is that those seeking the status of teacher are without the necessary moral qualifications, as indicated by the mention of "greater judgment" (μεῖζον κρίμα) and "stumble" (πταίομεν) in 3:1b–2a.[60] A natural result of many wanting to become teacher is that these "candidates" compete with each other in order to gain followers. Such competitions can easily develop into mutual attacks, mostly verbal attacks, among those involved. This can be a serious problem for the community, for as Davids comments: "Nothing could be more distressing to a community or more divisive than bickering and mutual verbal abuse, especially if the teachers of the community are those doing the sniping."[61]

As leaders of the community, the actions of the teachers are highly influential for other members. Social-scientific studies indicate that undesirable behaviours among the leaders could have two damaging effects for the community. First, when members of a group observe behaviours that are inconsistent to the endorsed group standard in other ingroup members, it induces dissonance among the group.[62] The emotional discomfort caused by such dissonance may then cause the members to disidentify with the group, and hence weakens the solidarity of the community.[63] Second, in order to reduce the dissonance, a usual response is to change one's own attitude, which means adjusting one's attitude to match that of an important group

[58] Lenski, *Power and Privilege*, 39–40.
[59] Deutsch, *Resolution of Conflict*, 70–71.
[60] Moo, *James*, 149, McKnight, *James*, 268–69. Adamson observes that those claiming to be teachers without proper qualification were a constant problem in the early church. See James B. Adamson, *James: The Man and His Message* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1989), 366.
[61] Davids, *James*, 135.
[62] Norton et. al., "Vicarious Dissonance," 47. See also Joel Cooper and Jeff Stone, "Cognitive Dissonance and the Social Group," in *Attitudes, Behavior, and Social Context: The Role of Norms and Group Membership*, eds. Deborah J. Terry and Michael A. Hogg (Mahwah: Erlbaum Associates, 2000), 227–44.
[63] Glasford et. al., "Intragroup dissonance," 1057–58. See also Blake M. McKimmie et. al., "I'm a Hypocrite, but So Is Everyone Else: Group Support and the Reduction of Cognitive Dissonance," *GDTRP* 7 (2003): 214–24.

member.[64] Therefore the hostile behaviours of the leaders could spread to other members, causing the conflict to escalate.

In light of such possible group dynamics, it is easy to understand why James follows the admonition about being teachers with a discourse about speech. Moreover, the rhetorical structure of Jas 3:1–12 proposed by Watson, with 3:1a being the *propositio*, further supports the idea that the focus of the whole passage is on the teachers.[65] In 3:2b–8, James uses several metaphors to emphasizes that the tongue, signifying one's speech, is untamable and can cause great damages. The details of these descriptions are not the concern here.[66] What should be noted is that in 3:9–10, the author discloses what is his main concern for the audience with respect to speech. There are several literary characteristics worth noticing in these two verses. First, the verbs for bless and curse in 3:9 are in the first person plural, returning to the usage in 3:1–2.[67] This links cursing in 3:9–10 back to the problem of teachers in the beginning of the passage. Second, the mention of blessing the Lord and Father, alluding to public worship, shows that James has the community life of the faith community specifically in view. Third, in contrary to the heavy use of metaphors in 3:2–8, James "leaves the metaphor behind" in 3:9–10, indicating that James here is paying attention to a specific misuse of the tongue among believers.[68] Lastly, the vocative "my brothers" in 3:10 also indicates this shift of focus from the general discourse of the tongue to a focus on the audience. These shifts reveal that while the theme of the double-tongue (δίγλωσσος) is common in both Jewish and Greek ethical discussions,[69] 3:9–10 is not just a general ethical comment, but concerns particularly the life of the audience. One may discern from this passage "the use of curse in anger,

[64] Norton et. al., "Vicarious Dissonance," 47–48.
[65] Watson, "James 3:1–12," 54–64. See also the similarly structure proposed in Hartin, *James*, 182.
[66] For an analysis of the use of metaphors in Jas 3:1–12, see Susanne Luther, "Protreptic Ethics in the Letter of James: The Potential of Figurative Language in Character Formation," in *Moral Language in the New Testament*, eds. Ruben Zimmermann and Jan G. van der Watt, WUNT 2/296 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 353–57.
[67] Brosend, *James and Jude*, 92, McKnight, *James*, 290. The first person plural is also used in 3:2b–8, but on the whole the main subject of that passage is the tongue. Hence the shift of focus in 3:9 to "we" is significant.
[68] Davids, *James*, 145, Martin, *James*, 118, McKnight, *James*, 290, William R. Baker, *Personal Speech-Ethics in the Epistle of James*, WUNT 2/68 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1995), 130–31.
[69] See Baker, *Speech-Ehtics*, 105–22, Allison, *James*, 548–49.

especially in inner-church party strife."[70] The cursing can refer generally to their lifestyle outside the worship assembly, in contrast to their apparent piety expressed in worship. However, in light of the problem about teachers in 3:1 and the disorder mentioned in 3:16, this rebuke on cursing might also have in view community members cursing each other. Such cursing would be the consequence of their disputes stemming from competitions among teachers.[71] The desire for the honour of being a teacher has turned into debasing actions in the faith community.

Social-scientific studies on conflict may further illuminate the dynamic reflected in the passage. The most common negative emotion associated with conflict is anger. Common responses to anger, such as physical attacks, verbal attacks, and nonverbal expression of disapproval, invite reciprocation and contribute to escalation of conflicts.[72] The cursing in Jas 3:9–10 is a form of verbal attack which is no longer targeted at disputed issues but at the opponent. Such attacks provoke hostile attitudes which in turn encourage the use of heavy contentious tactics on the opponent's side.[73] Thus a vicious spiral of action and reaction is set up between conflicting parties, leading the relationship to damaging ends.[74] Sociologists also observe that in cultures that emphasize honor, such as that of the New Testament world, harsh reactions to provocation are more likely to occur.[75] These social-scientific observations support a connection between the competition among teachers in Jas 3:1 and the sins of the tongue in Jas 3:2–12, in particular the cursing in 3:9–10.

3.4.2 False Wisdom and Disorder in Community (Jas 3:13–18)

More consequences of competition between teachers or would-be teachers can be seen in 3:14–16. A discussion of the relation between 3:13–18 and 3:1–12 must be made here. Structurally and grammatically, the link between the two

[70] Davids, *James*, 146. Martin, *James*, 118–19 observes that the present tense of the verb καταρώμεθα suggests an activity currently taking place among the audience. This further supports Davids' view.
[71] Adamson comments that cursing in Jas 3:9 probably refers to disputes and slanders within the community. See Adamson, *James*, 146.
[72] Folger et. al. *Working through Conflict*, 47–49. See also William E. Hulme, "Mind Your Tongue: Reflections on Christian Conversation," *Word and World* 6/3 (1986): 253.
[73] Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 105.
[74] Ibid., 96–97, 102–11, Wilmot et. al., *Interpersonal Conflict*, 21–23.
[75] Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 132. See also Richard E. Nisbett and Dov Cohen, *Culture of Honor: The Psychology of Violence in the South* (Boulder, Colo.; Oxford: Westview, 1996).

passages is weak.[76] This leads Dibelius to claim that 3:13–18 is an entirely independent section.[77] However, as Dibelius himself noted, the connection between the false wisdom in 3:14–16 and the sins of the tongue in the previous section can be easily constructed psychologically, even though the linkage is not explicitly indicated in the text.[78] Hence, even if the author is here adopting originally independent traditions, he does so with a consideration of the context.[79] Moreover, more links between 3:13–18 and 3:1–12, including literary and thematic links, have been observed by commentators.[80] Thus the admonitions about wanting to be teachers and wrong uses of the tongue should inform the interpretation of 3:13–18.

At first sight, the key theme of 3:13–18 is obviously true and false wisdoms. This pericope contains three out of the four occurrences of the word σοφία in James (3:13, 15, 17), plus the only occurrence of the adjective σοφός (3:13). Nevertheless, while not denying the importance of wisdom, Allison observes that the key theme is not really wisdom but peace, which is produced by wisdom, and is the climax of the passage.[81] By distinguishing true and false "wisdoms", James is exhorting his audience to be peacemakers, in contrast to the jealousy and strife mentioned in 3:14–16.[82] This observation highlights the relevance of 3:13–18 to conflicts among the audience, and hence further supports reading 3:13–18 with 3:1–12.

Jas 3:13 begins with the question τίς σοφὸς καὶ ἐπιστήμων ἐν ὑμῖν (who is wise and understanding among you). The indefiniteness of the question should not be regarded as indicating a purely abstract warning.[83] First of all, the phrase ἐν ὑμῖν here, as in 4:1, indicates that the author has the actual situation of the audience in

[76] Davids notes that the beginning of 3:13, τίς plus imperative, is used in 5:13–14 to introduce a new unit. Also the vocabulary in 3:13–18 is not closely linked to that of 3:1–12. However, Davids follows Mussner's observations that the ideas in 3:1–12 are related to those in 3:13–18. See Davids, *James*, 149 and Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 168–69.
[77] Dibelius, *James*, 208–9.
[78] Ibid., 209.
[79] Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 168–69.
[80] See Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 76, Johnson, *James*, 268, Martin, *James*, 125–27, Watson, "James 3:1–12," 52.
[81] Allison, *James*, 564.
[82] Ibid., 564.
[83] Davids, *James* 150. Though Hartin, *James*, 191 observes that such brief questions are typical features of the diatribe, the question in 3:13 should not just be regarded as so.

mind. Furthermore, the two adjectives σοφός and ἐπιστήμων, while not restricted to descriptions of teachers, nevertheless present an image of teachers. The first term σοφός is often associated with teachers or leaders in Israel.[84] It is an essential characteristic of teachers, though it can also designate any wise person. The second term ἐπιστήμων occurs only here in the NT. It has a similar meaning as σοφός, but place greater emphasis on knowledge.[85] It could refer to anyone who claims to have expert knowledge and esoteric understanding.[86] Such knowledge would also be important qualifications of teachers. The combination of these two terms is used in the LXX to describe leaders of Israel (Deut. 1:13, 15), as well as the whole people (Deut. 4:6). Yet it should be noticed that in the latter case, the whole people of Israel is called to keep the law so that *they will be seen as wise and understanding in the eyes of other nations*. Hence, a sense of being teacher or exemplar is still there. Therefore, while the opening question in Jas 3:13 is addressed to the whole audience, those who wish to be teachers are especially in view. It thus connects the passage back to the opening of the chapter in reference to the teachers.[87] The question can be construed as a sarcastic remark for anyone in the community who claim to be wise and thus qualified as a teacher.[88] As teachers or would-be teachers, they are probably claiming themselves as wise and understanding. James' question presses them to examine if they are really so — in the standard of James.

The good behaviour and meekness that a truly wise person should possess (3:13) is then contrasted by descriptions of the effects of earthly wisdom (3:14–16). In contrast to the rhetorical question in 3:13, there is a first class conditional clause in 3:14, indicating that the author "assumes that his characterization suits some of his readers."[89] The expressions of earthly wisdom are described by ζῆλος and ἐριθεία

[84] In Jewish traditions, the rabbi is the wise person whose teaching embraced practical moral wisdom based on the Torah. See Hartin, *James*, 191. See also E. Lohse, ῥαββί, ῥαββονί, *TDNT* 6:961–63.
[85] Johnson, *James*, 270.
[86] Martin, *James*, 128.
[87] Hartin, *James*, 191. See also David P. Scaer, *James: The Apostle of Faith* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1983), 104 and D. Edmond Hiebert, *The Epistle of James: Tests of a Living Faith* (Chicago: Moody, 1979), 226.
[88] Moo, *James*, 169 is right in saying that James invites any of his readers who might pride themselves on their wisdom to consider seriously what he is about to say. However, it should still be remarked that such pride on wisdom most likely happens on those looking for a teacher status.
[89] Allison, *James*, 572. Culpepper further comments that may be especially evident in its leaders and would-be leaders. See R. Alan Culpepper, "The Power of Words and the Tests of Two Wisdoms:

(3:14, 16). While the word ζῆλος (zeal) is semantically neutral, it often connotes a negative sense. This is obviously the case in this context, especially since it is modified by the adjective πικρός (bitter).[90] It signifies a zeal that is accompanied by hostility towards others. Hence most English versions translate ζῆλος in this passage as "jealousy"[91] or "envy"[92]. The adjective "bitter" provides a verbal link with 3:11,[93] thus joining the concept of cursing in the previous section with the expression of earthly wisdom.[94] The ζῆλον πικρὸν within believers finds its manifestation in their cursing each other. The other term ἐριθεία (ambition) is used in Aristotle[95] where it means "a self-seeking pursuit of political office by unfair means."[96] In the NT the word appears seven times.[97] Each time it carries a meaning of self-ambition. Hartin observes that in Romans, 2 Corinthians and Galatians, the word means "the use of unworthy means in order to promote one's own self-interest to the detriment of others, particularly the community," and it is also in this sense the word is used in James.[98] Moreover, Davids claims that the word's appearance in the vice lists in Galatians and 2 Corinthians bears a sense of "party spirit" which causes division in the community,[99] and such a sense is probable also in Philippians.[100] Martin conjectures that the teachers had gathered around themselves a support group that offered physical and emotional aid, resulting in formation of factions.[101] Regardless of the accuracy of Martin's historical reconstruction, it is possible that ἐριθεία characterizes partisanship and a divided community.[102] Therefore, the terms ζῆλος and ἐριθεία together convey in Jas 3:14–16 a community in which members, and

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James 3," *RevExp* 83 (1986): 415. See also BDF §371.1 and the discussion of first class condition in Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1996), 690–94. Though the first class condition does not mean that the condition is true, the imperative in the *apodosis* makes it more likely that the author affirms the truth of the *protasis*.

[90] Martin, *James*, 130. See also BDAG, s.v. ζῆλος.

[91] For example: ESV, NASB, NET, NJB, RSV.

[92] For example: NIV, NKJ, NRSV.

[93] Johnson, *James*, 271.

[94] Wall, *Community of the Wise*, 183.

[95] *Politica* 1302b, 1303a.

[96] BDAG, s.v. ἐριθεία. See also Martin, *James*, 130 and F. Büchsel, ἐριθεία, *TDNT* 2:660–61.

[97] Rom 2:8, 2 Co 12:20, Gal 5:20, Phil 1:17; 2:3, Jas 3:14, 16.

[98] Hartin, *James*, 192.

[99] Davids, *James*, 151.

[100] Moisés Silva, *Philippians*, 2nd ed., BECNT (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2005), 85–88.

[101] Martin, *James*, 130.

[102] Allison, *James*, 573, McKnight, *James*, 304.

especially leaders, are striving for self-interest, so that hostility builds up, leading to danger of division.

The immediate expressions of bitter zeal and ambition are "boasting" and "lying against the truth" (3:14b). The negative imperatives in the present tense have a sense of "stop doing these,"[103] which implies that some members of the audience may have been doing so. Within the context of 3:13–14, it is likely that the author is commanding against boasting in one's own claim of wisdom.[104] The other phrase ψεύδεσθε κατὰ τῆς ἀληθείας (lie against the truth) troubles commentators. Many see a redundancy in the phrase, since lying is by definition against the truth.[105] Among the attempts to make sense of the phrase,[106] perhaps Wall's suggestion that the phrase means "an arrogant use of truth-claims to promote a selfish end" fits the immediate context best.[107] James' admonition in 3:14 reveals a situation of competition between rival claims of teaching authorities.[108] Some members of the audience are boasting to be wise and claims that they teaches the truth,[109] but their behaviour actually shows the corrupted thoughts inside them.

Earthly wisdom, with its expression of boasting and lying against the truth, results in disorder (ἀκαταστασία) and evil deeds (φαῦλον πρᾶγμα) among the community (3:16). The word ἀκαταστασία has already been used in James to describe the instability of the double-minded (1:8) and the tongue (3:8), but its meaning in 3:16 is best understood as "causing social unrest".[110] Such disorder in the community is a natural consequence of rivalries between those claiming to be wise.[111] The phrase

[103] Adamson, *James*, 151.
[104] Martin, *James*, 131.
[105] Allison, *James*, 574. See also Johnson, *James*, 271–72.
[106] Some suggest that it means "claiming to be wise when in truth one is foolish." See for example Davids, *James*, 151, Ropes, *James*, 246, Mayor, *James*, 127–28. Others suggest that the truth here refers to the gospel. See , *James*, 246–47, Knowling, *James*, 86, Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 158, McKnight, *James*, 305, McCartney, *James*, 200.
[107] Wall, *Community of the Wise*, 184.
[108] Laws, *James*, 160.
[109] Martin observes that the ideas of wisdom and possessing the truth run together. This is especially the case for religious teachers. See Martin, *James*, 131.
[110] Johnson, *James*, 273, McKnight, *James*, 309. Hartin interpret it as "in opposition to established authority." See Hartin, *James*, 194. Adamson asserts that "anarchy" best sum up James' idea here. See Adamson, *James*, 153.
[111] Davids, "Theological Perspectives," 101. It is contrary to Laws' claim that instead of rival claims of competing wisdoms, the disorder is rather a result from the pursuit of individual desires. See Laws,

πᾶν φαῦλον πρᾶγμα could refer to anything repulsive,[112] but its coupling with ἀκαταστασία makes it more likely to refer to the evils that result from disorder within the community.[113] In other words, James is here worrying about the "sociological effects of false teaching,"[114] the turbulence in the community caused by conflict among those seeking the position of teacher.

Again, studies in social-science can shed light on the situation reflected in the passage. From a perspective of social identity, a leader of a group must represent a desirable group prototype.[115] Being wise and understanding would be important aspects of such a prototype, especially for the position of teachers. Therefore, for those who want to be teachers, it is essential for them to prove themselves to be wise. An important way to do so is to assert their possession of truth. This accounts for the boasting in James' audience. This also implies that rivals tend to regard the claims of the opponents as against the truth and hence illegitimate. In such a situation, conflict is especially likely to escalate.[116] The claim of possessing truth also promotes an either/or power structure, which stimulates attempts to gain more power.[117] In such power competitions, disputants would become increasingly aggressive in pursuing personal goals.[118] Hence one sees the jealousy and selfish ambition come into the scene (Jas 3:14, 16). Under such a condition, people would seek to demonstrate their superiority over others by either eliciting signs of honor or spitting out insults.[119] Studies in conflict behaviours also observe that deception is sometimes used by disputants in conflict as a means for gaining desired outcomes.[120] Such deceptive behaviours would in turn provoke retributive responses and cause more deception on

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James, 162. It is not to deny that individual desires have a role in the audience's conflict, as it is mentioned explicitly in 4:1–3. However, the dominance of the idea of wisdom in 3:13–18 indicates that teachers or leaders are still the primary concern in this section.

[112] Allison, *James*, 579.

[113] Hartin, *James*, 194.

[114] Wall, *Community of the Wise*, 186–87.

[115] Haslem, *Psychology in Organizations*, 66.

[116] Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 103. See also Kathleen A. Kennedy and Emily Pronin, "When Disagreement Gets Ugly: Perceptions of Bias and the Escalation of Conflict," *PSPB* 34 (2008): 833–48.

[117] Wilmot et. al., *Interpersonal Conflict*, 97–99.

[118] Folger et. al., *Working through Conflict*, 115.

[119] Pheme Perkins, "James 3:16–4:3," *Int* 37 (1982): 283. See also Robert F. Chaffin, Jr. "The Theme of Wisdom in the Epistle of James," *ATJ* 29 (1997): 30–31.

[120] M.E. Schweitzer et. al., "Conflict Frames and the Use of Deception: Are Competitive Negotiators Less Ethical?" *JASP* 35 (2005): 2126–28.

both sides.[121] This may account for the accusation of lying against the truth (3:14). Furthermore, the conflict between individuals not only changes their personal attitudes and behaviours, but also changes the community surrounding them through polarization of the community, which means other members of the community being forced to join one side of the disputants.[122] In this process, hostile attitudes and goals also tend to become group norms.[123] These phenomena are probably behind the partisanship and disorder mentioned in Jas 3:14–16. Thus, Jas 3 may reflect a scenario of dyadic conflict escalating into group conflict.

From the above discussion on the conflict situations reflected in Jas 3, it becomes apparent that Jas 4:1–3 is a natural continuation of Jas 3. It suffices to highlight here that the ideas of jealousy (ζῆλος), self-ambition (ἐριθεία) and the resulting disorder (ἀκαταστασία) in 3:14–16 are echoed by desire (ἡδονή), envy (ζηλόω), war (πόλεμος, πολεμέω), fighting (μάχη, μάχομαι) and murder (φονεύω) in 4:1–3. On the other hand, there are also links between 3:1–12 and 3:13–18.[124] Hence it is possible to view 3:1–4:10 as a whole.[125] Besides linguistic and structural linkages, from the perspective of community conflict it is obvious that there is a continuity of thought running from 3:1 through 4:10. In the whole passage one can see also a development of ideas. The author begins with a caution for those wanting to be teachers, hinting at competitions among these teachers and would-be teachers. He then reproaches the evil behaviours arising from such rivalry, such as cursing, boasting and false teaching. However, the general tone in 3:13–18 indicates that the problem was not restricted to teachers, but was probably spreading among the whole community, leading to disorder and evil deeds. This situation leads to James' admonition on wars and fightings among the audience in 4:1–3.[126] Hence, 3:13–18

[121] T.L. Boles, et. al., "Deception and Retribution in Repeated Ultimantum Bargaining," *OBHDP* 83 (2000): 235–59, J. Brandts and G. Charness, "Truth or Consequences? An Experiment," *ManSci* 49 (2003): 116–30.
[122] Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 118–19.
[123] Ibid., 113. See also the discussion on bottom-up effects of intragroup conflict in Korsgaard et al., "Multilevel," 1241–42.
[124] See above n80.
[125] So Davids, *James*, 135–70, McKnight, *James*, 264–68. Davids and McKnight also include 4:11–12 in this whole passage. The relation of 4:11–12 to 3:1–4:10 will be discussed in the next section.
[126] McKnight, *James*, 308. Draper suggests that the "asking and not receiving" in Jas 4:2–3 relates to the teachers' request for financial or material resources from the community. See Jonathan Draper, "Apostles, Teachers, and Evangelists: Stability and Movement of Functionaries in Matthew, James

can be seen as a transition from 3:1–12 to 4:1–10.[127] The whole passage conveys that conflict among leaders is escalating, or has been escalated into community conflict, resulting in disorder in the community.

3.5 Other Sins with Speeches

Besides the accusation of blessing God and cursing people with the same mouth (3:9–12), other sins with one's speech are also mentioned in Jas 4–5. Three short passages will be considered here to see their relations to the above discussed conflict situations reflected in James. These passages concern slandering (4:11–12), grumbling (5:9), and swearing (5:12).

3.5.1 Slandering (Jas 4:11–12)

How Jas 4:11–12 connects with the passages before and after it is a debated issue. Some regard 4:11–12 as a discrete unit,[128] others connect it to what precedes,[129] and still others connect it to what follows.[130] For the purpose of this study, only a couple of points will be noted.[131] First, these two verses clearly pick up themes from the previous sections. Slandering, or speaking evil against one another (καταλαλεῖτε ἀλλήλων) in 4:11, an action linked to jealousy, selfishness, quarrels, pride, and double-mindedness, is a manifestation of the pride that God resists (4:6),

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and the Didache," in *Mathew, James, and Didache*, eds. Huub van de Sandt and Jürgen K. Zangenberg (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 171. However, such a reading will be too restrictive. Although the financial ambition of the teachers may well be included in James' idea of "desire" in 4:1–3, the rivalry and ambition are not confined to leaders, but potentially affecting all members of the community. See Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 142.

[127] Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 77. He quotes Adamson, *James*, 138–39, Joachim Wanke, "Die urchristlichen Lehrer nach dem Zeugnis des Jakobusbriefes," in *Die Kirche des Anfangs, für Heinz Schürmann*, eds. R. Schnackenburg, Josef Ernst and Joachim Wanke (Freiburg: Herder, 1978), 492, James M. Reese, "The Exegete as Sage: Hearing the Message of James," *BTB* 12 (1982): 83–84, Martin, *James*, 127–28, Watson, "James 3:1–12," 52, and François Vouga, *L'Épître de Saint Jacques*, CNT 13A (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1984), 93–94, 102–4 as having similarly views.

[128] Burton S. Easton, and Gordon Poteat, "The Epistle of James," in The Interpreter's Bible, vol. 12, ed. George A. Buttrick (New York: Abingdon, 1957), 58, Laws, *James*, 186, Hartin, *James*, 219–20, Vouga, *Saint Jacques*, 120, Michael J. Townsend, *The Epistle of James*, Epworth Commentaries (London: Epworth, 1994), 84, Varner, "Theme and Structure," 127–28, Mark E. Taylor and George H. Guthrie. "The Structure of James," CBQ 68 (2006): 692–93.

[129] Dibelius, *James*, 208, Davids, *James*, 169, Allison, *James*, 588–639, McCartney, *James*, 205–22, Thurén, "Risky Rhetoric," 280.

[130] Adamson, *James*, 175–81, Martin, *James*, 159–62, Johnson, *James*, 291–92, Wall, *Community of the Wise*, 210–12.

[131] For a more detailed discussion, see Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 77–79.

and thus is to be avoided by humility before God (4:10).[132] It is an explicit expression of community strife which involve putting down of others.[133] This misuse of speech is also clearly linked with the sinfulness of the tongue in 3:1–12.[134] Hence Brosend comments that 4:11–12 "develop the implication of vv. 6–10 in light of the community concerns of chapters 2 and 3."[135] Second, Johnson observes that 4:11–12 opens a series of examples of arrogant behaviours (4:11–12; 4:13–17; 5:1–6), which illustrate concretely the call to repent in 4:6–10.[136] This observation highlights that these admonitions in James are not isolated, but are controlled by some central themes. In light of the above arguments, it is perhaps the best to view 4:11–12 as a transition passage that links what precedes and what follows it.[137] A continuous line of thought, which shows the author's concern for the integrity and cohesiveness of the faith community, can be discerned here.

The basic meaning of the verb καταλαλέω is "to speak ill of," but it can also carry the meaning of defame or slander.[138] It may describe both public disparagement and more private, covert grumbling.[139] It is a misuse of the tongue which, like cursing, shows hostility within a person towards another. It is also an outward expression of judging others.[140] Obviously slandering has strongly negative effects for a community. McCartney thus describes the action of slandering and its effects:

> Many slanderers probably are unaware that they are spreading falsehood; they believe their negative accusations and censorious remarks to be reasonably well founded, and they may even see themselves as having a special calling to inform the world of someone's evil or to preserve a church's purity by excising its less-than-perfect members. ... Slander

[132] Moo, *James*, 197.
[133] Davids, *James*, 169.
[134] Martin, *James*, 163. McKnight, *James*, 359 suggests further that 4:11–12 forms an *inclusio* with 3:1–2, hence one may view that the entire section from 3:1 to 4:12 is concerned with teachers.
[135] Brosend, *James and Jude*, 117.
[136] Johnson, *James*, 292. See also Wall, *Community of the Wise*, 212. Cargal even extend the section up to the end of the letter by observing a contrasting *inclusio* between 4:11 and 5:19. See Timothy B. Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora: Discursive Structure and Purpose in the Epistle of James*, SBLDS 144 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 170–71.
[137] Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 79, Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, 169.
[138] BDAG, s.v. καταλαλέω. See also the discussion of the meaning of the word in McKnight, *James*, 360–61.
[139] McCartney, *James*, 220.
[140] Words related to judging are prominent in 4:11–12. Blevins even suggests that slandering and judging are synonymous in this passage. See William L. Blevins, "A Call to Repent, Love Others, and Remember God: James 4," *RevExp* 83 (1986): 423.

> indirectly imposes censure because the wider community is implicitly being encouraged to ostracize the accused person, who may well be innocent.[141]

The action of slandering reveals someone who claims to be wiser than others (3:13), and hence has the responsibility and privilege to lead the community to the right direction (3:1). The action also has a great potential to spread to other members and thus polarizing the community, causing division and disorder (3:16). Hence the admonition against slandering fits well within James' concern for the conflicts among the audience, especially that reflected in Jas 3.[142] Moreover, in 4:11 one sees the same construction of μή plus present imperative as in 3:14. Hence the sense here is probably "stop slandering." It implies that members of the audience are participating in this action. It is a concrete expression of the boasting (3:14) or wars and fightings (4:1–2) that are being rebuked in the previous sections, as well as a manifestation of the uncontrollability of the tongue (3:2–8).

Social-scientific studies about group dynamics may shed further light on James' concern on slandering. When conflict occurs within a group, opposing subgroups may be formed, and thus ingroup-outgroup dynamics materialize within the group. In such situations, slandering, as an expression of ingroup bias and outgroup derogation, is a probable outcome. The spreading and polarizing effects of this action then feed back to heighten the level of conflict. The reactions of groups in conflict are usually more severe than those of individuals, owing to the need to maintain a positive social identity.[143] Hence, James' admonition against slandering is totally reasonable and necessary for maintaining the solidarity of the community.

3.5.2 Grumbling against One Another (Jas 5:9)

Another admonition against sinful speeches appears in 5:9, where James warns against grumbling against one another (μὴ στενάζετε, ἀδελφοί, κατ' ἀλλήλων). The meaning of στενάζω is "to express oneself involuntarily in the face of an

[141] McCartney, *James*, 220.
[142] Moo comments that the divisions that were wracking the church reflected in 3:13–4:3 provide the best explanation for James' concern for slandering. See Moo, *James*, 198.
[143] Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 133. See also Yoram Jaffe and Yoel Yinon, "Collective Aggression: The Group-Individual Paradigm in the Study of Collective Antisocial Behavior," in *Small Groups and Social Interaction*, eds. Herbert H. Blumberg et. al. (New York: Wiley, 1983), 1:267–75 and Henri Tajfel, "Experiments in Intergroup Discrimination," *SA* 223 (1970): 96–102.

undesirable circumstance, sigh, groan."[144] It is a natural response to suffering, hence by itself is not sinful.[145] Thus James is not rebuking the audience's groaning as such, but their grumbling "against one another" (κατ' ἀλλήλων). This phrase indicates that negative emotions are not expressed to God as they should be, but directed to the wrong targets, that is, fellow believers. Hence some English versions translate the verb στενάζω as "complain",[146] an action of blaming others for one's suffering, which involves "a wide assortment of verbal wrongs."[147] The phrase κατ' ἀλλήλων also shows that James' concern is on relationships within the church, which is in danger of disunity.[148] The inappropriate reactions of believers are damaging the harmony of the faith community.

The command against grumbling fits well with its context in James.[149] It is the second of three consecutive exhortations in 5:7–11.[150] The first and the third exhortations encourage the audience to be patient (5:7–8) and to take the Old Testament examples of patience (5:10–11). Gray observes that impatience often manifests itself in grumbling, so it is reasonable for the author to put the three commands together.[151] Concerning the causes of the believers' grumbling, Adamson stresses that James is not thinking of personal afflictions, but "malicious, inconsiderate, or unintended vexations such as we sometimes suffer from our friends, enemies, or others."[152] More precisely, it is noted that 4:13–5:6, the immediate pretext of 5:7–11, mentions the rich's arrogance and their oppression of the poor. Since most believers in the early church are among the poor, they would feel the

[144] BDAG, s.v. στενάζω.
[145] Davids, *James*, 184. The verb occurs five other times in the New Testament (Mar 7:34; Rom 8:23; 2Cor 5:2, 4; Heb 13:17), none of which refers to a sinful action. Some commentators note even the positive example of Israelites groaning under their slavery in Egypt, which God heard and remembered them. See Johnson, *James*, 316 and Hartin, *James*, 243.
[146] For example: NASB, NJB.
[147] Baker, *Speech-Ethics*, 180.
[148] McCartney, *James*, 242, Hartin, *James*, 243, Davids, *James*, 184–85.
[149] Contra Dibelius, *James*, 244. Dibelius regards the verse as isolated, so there is no need to find connections between the warning and the preceding sayings.
[150] The three exhortations share some parallel features such as the use of the vocative ἀδελφοι, and the particle ἰδού. See Sheila Klassen-Wiebe, "Between Text and Sermon: James 5:7–11," *Int* 66 (2012): 74. Brosend, *James and Jude*, 144 observes other evidences in support of the unity of 5:7–11 including the assonance of "strength" (στηρίξατε) and "grumble" (στενάζετε), and the heightened eschatological awareness in 5:8,9.
[151]Patrick Gray, "Points and Lines: Thematic Parallelism in the Letter of James and the Testament of Job," *NTS* 50 (2004): 423.
[152] Adamson, *James*, 191.

afflictions deeply. Under such circumstances, bitter feeling would arise and this may "become personal and directed as criticism against fellow believers."[153] Such bitter feelings would stimulate dissension within the community.

The links between 5:9 and 4:11–12 is also widely observed.[154] Some features of 5:9 indeed show strong affinity to 4:11–12. First, the same grammatical construct of μή plus present imperative is used to express the command. Hence the force of 5:9 should be "do not keep complaining about each other."[155] Second, both passages contain the pronoun ἀλλήλων, which indicates that the concern is for intra-communal relations. Third, words related to judging (κρίνω, κριτής) appear in both 5:9 and 4:11–12. Thus the actions of slandering and grumbling against each other are linked together as they are both actions subjected to the judgment of the Lord. Hence, Jas 5:9 continues the motif of sinful speeches in James (3:1–12; 4:11–12).[156] It provides another example of disturbance that contributes to the unrest and disorder among James´ audience (3:16).

3.5.3 Swearing (Jas 5:12)

The last example of sinful speech is swearing, or taking oaths. The verb ὄμνυμι means "to affirm the veracity of one's statement by invoking a transcendent entity."[157] Jas 5:12 resembles closely the prohibition of swearing in Matt 5:34–37. This clearly indicates that James is here adopting some Jesus tradition, though the relation between the two passages is debated.[158] Caution against swearing is common in Jewish and Hellenistic traditions,[159] but the absoluteness of the prohibition on oaths in Matthew and James is singular, since oaths are not strictly prohibited in the Old Testament. Sometimes the use of oaths is even requested by the law (eg. Exod

[153] Martin, *James*, 192.
[154] Laws, *James*, 213, Davids, *James*, 185, Johnson, *James*, 317, Hartin, *James*, 243, McCartney, *James*, 242, Martin, *James*, 192, Brosend, *James and Jude*, 144.
[155] Laws, *James*, 213.
[156] Moo, *James*, 224. For the continuity between 5:9 and previous passages, see also Klassen-Wiebe, "James 5:7–11," 76 and Allison, *James*, 706.
[157] BDAG, s.v. ὄμνυμι.
[158] For some discussions on the relation between the two passages, see Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 214–16, Dibelius, *James*, 251, Davids, *James*, 190, Hartin, *James*, 188–91, Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 206–7, Allison, *James*, 728–29, and Deppe, *Sayings of Jesus*, 148. See also Paul Foster, "Q and James: A Source-Critical Conundrum," in *James, 1 & 2 Peter and Early Jesus Traditions*, eds. Alicia Batten and John Kloppenborg, LNTS 478 (London: T&T Clark, 2014), 29–30.
[159] Allison, *James*, 731–33.

22:8). Hence, some commentators regard the saying as an exaggeration, which does not intend to abandon official oaths altogether, but prohibit oaths in everyday speech, oaths that are sometimes used in "connecting casuistry to the integrity of one's words."[160] More importantly, it is widely observed that the aim of Jesus' teaching on oaths, and James' application of Jesus' word, is more on advocating truthfulness than on prohibiting the action of taking oaths as such.[161] While forbidding swearing, James at the same time requests truthful speech of his audience (ἤτω δὲ ὑμῶν τὸ ναὶ ναὶ καὶ τὸ οὒ οὔ). This shows the author's concern of the unity of the faith community, as "[t]ruthful speech is a vital aspect of the unity which binds together the new community of Christians."[162] Minear further observes that truthful speech is particularly important for the unity of a community in ancient Mediterranean cultures where oral communication is the primary way of interpersonal interactions.[163] Thus one sees again in Jas 5:12 a concern for community cohesiveness. Furthermore, the present imperative in James, in contrast to the aorist in Matthew, might again indicate that James is issuing a prohibition against the current practice of his audience, as in 4:11–12 and 5:9. Therefore, the prohibition on swearing, even though an adoption of traditional material, is not unrelated to the community situation of James' audience.

It is also debated concerning how Jas 5:12 stands in its context. Dibelius is representative in suggesting that there is indeed no thematic connection between 5:12 and what precedes or follows it.[164] He regards 5:12 as an independent admonition adopted from traditional sayings. However, it is possible to see links between this verse and its immediate context. Johnson proposes that 5:12 introduces the positive use of speech, of which the prayers discussed in 5:13–18 are examples.[165] On the other hand, Niebuhr regards the prohibition of swearing as part of the cluster in

[160] McKnight, *James*, 427–29.
[161] See for example McCartney, *James*, 245–47, Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 205–6, Johnson, *James*, 341, Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, NTL (London: SCMP, 1971), 220, Anthony C. Thiselton, "Oath," *NIDB* 4:311.
[162] William R. Baker, "'Above All Else': Contexts of the Call for Verbal Integrity in James 5:12," *JSNT* 54 (1994): 62.
[163] Paul Minear, "Yes or No: The Demand for Honesty in the Early Church," *NovT* 13 (1971): 12–13.
[164] Dibelius, *James*, 248.
[165] Johnson, *James*, 326–27.

James concerning sins of the tongue.[166] Hence it is at least reasonable to trace this admonition also back to the series of commands against the misuse of the tongue.[167] Moreover, the theme of judgment also occurs in 5:12 (ἵνα μὴ ὑπὸ κρίσιν πέσητε). It connects the prohibition on swearing to the previous sections.[168] Some commentators go even further to claim that the prohibition of swearing is closely related to the theme of patience in 5:7–11. They claim that swearing is an exhibition of impatience.[169] However, the argument for this last suggestion seems to be weak, since swearing or taking oaths is not typically an expression of impatience.

The meaning of the phrase πρὸ πάντων is also debated. Some regard the phrase as connoting a comparison of importance between the prohibition of swearing and the preceding exhortations.[170] However, there seems to be no satisfactory answer to the question that in what way is swearing more serious than other sins mentioned in James. Hence, other commentators regard the phrase not as a comparison of importance, but as emphatic, calling attention of the audience.[171] Some argue further that the phrase serves a literary function of introducing the conclusion of the letter.[172] The fact that vocative ἀδελφοί μου, which often denotes a beginning of a new section in James, appears in 5:12 and does not appear again until 5:19 further supports this last view.[173] Moreover, studies in forms and structures of Hellenistic letters suggest that the phrase is often used to indicate that the epistle is near its closing.[174] Hence it is preferable to see πρὸ πάντων in 5:12 as an introductory formula rather than a concluding formula.

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[166] Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr, "Ethics and Anthropology in the Letter of James: An Outline," in *Early Christian Ethics in Interaction with Jewish and Greco-Roman Contexts*, eds. Jan Willem van Henten and Joseph Verheyden, STAR 17 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 234.
[167] So Vouga, *Saint Jacques*, 138, Adamson, *James*, 194, Martin, *James*, 203, Hartin, *James*, 261.
[168] Davids observes this link, though he is not convinced with it. See Davids, *James*, 188–89.
[169] So Reicke, *James*, 56, Ropes, *James*, 300, McCartney, *James*, 247.
[170] So Joseph B. Mayor, *The Epistle of St. James*, 3rd edition (London: Macmillan, 1910), 165, Reicke, *James*, 56, Randolph V. G. Tasker, *The General Epistle of James*, TNTC (London: Tyndale Press, 1957), 123–24, Baker, *Personal Speech-Ethics*, 279.
[171] So Knowling, *James*, 135, Davids, *James*, 189, Cantinat, *Saint Jacques*, 241, Deppe, *Sayings of Jesus*, 135–36, McKnight, *James*, 424–25, Brosend, *James and Jude*, 149–50.
[172] So Johnson, *James*, 326–27, Brosend, *James and Jude*, 149, Moo, *James*, 232, Hartin, *James*, 257–58.
[173] Laws, *James*, 220.
[174] See for example Francis Xavier J. Exler, *The Form of the Ancient Greek Letter: A Study in Greek Epistolography* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1923), 113–14, John L. White, *Light from the Ancient Letters*, Foundations and Facets (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 200–201, and Francis, "Form and Function," 125.

Combining the above observations, one sees two aspects of relation between the admonition in 5:12 with its context. Structurally, it introduces the concluding section of the letter. With this verse the author begins to deliver his final exhortations, which he emphasizes by the phrase πρὸ πάντων, to his audience. Thematically, the command brought to a climax James' concern on speeches.[175] It ends the series of examples of sinful speeches that begins in Jas 3. Thus, 5:12 is not unrelated to the concern of community conflict in the previous sections.

Baker points out that verbal integrity is fundamental to preserving societal structures.[176] The admonition against swearing in James points directly to the truthfulness of believers. In a community where members have not enough trust for each other, oaths would be needed to compensate the lack of trustfulness.[177] Hence James' prohibition of swearing can be viewed as a response to the discord among his audience. Such discord is a natural result of the conflicts evident in Jas 3–4. Conversely, sociological studies have shown that distrust itself can lead to conflict.[178] So one sees again a vicious cycle of conflict escalation: Conflicts provoke distrust, which in turn heighten the conflict situation. The concern of Jas 5:12 is not so much swearing as such than the destructive effect it has on the faith community in which distrust is building up and breaking the whole community.

3.5.4 Concluding Summary

There is a series of admonitions in Jas 4–5 related to speech. Slandering, grumbling against each other, and the need of swearing to show one's trustfulness are instances of interpersonal expressions in a community under intra-communal conflict. These passages in James are not isolated sayings unrelated to their contexts, but form a consistent theme on sinful speeches, which is connected to the conflict situations revealed in 3:1–4:10. In particular, these admonitions are continuations of the theme of the evil tongue in 3:1–12. Speech can show explicitly the hostility between disputants, and wrongful speech can destroy the community itself.[179] It can also be

[175] Baker, "Above All Else," 59.
[176] Ibid., 59.
[177] McCartney, *James*, 247.
[178] Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 25.
[179] Hartin, "Vision, Ethics, and Ethos," 463.

used to disguise one's evil intentions.[180] Hence James has severe reproaches to sinful speeches among believers. James' preoccupation with proper speech reflects the author's concern for a healthy faith community, which is currently embattled by internal dissension as well as external pressures.[181] Rather than being general ethical exhortations, James' teaching on speech is indeed motivated by the actual needs of the audience.

3.6 Tension between the Rich and the Poor

Wealth and poverty is an important part of James' overall concern for the faith community.[182] It is first introduced in 1:9–11, and is the theme of several passages in the letter's main body (2:1–13; 4:13–17; 5:1–6). The prominence of this theme suggests that it is partly based on the knowledge of the actual situation of the audience.[183] This theme in James has been noted and discussed by many scholars.[184] However, the focus of previous discussions on this theme is mainly on the tension between the church and the Greco-Roman culture. However, upon closer examination, it can be seen that the theme of wealth and poverty in James also has an intra-communal aspect. In James' view, tension between the rich and the poor contributes to the conflict among believers. Since the above discussion has already revealed some intra-communal conflicts reflected in James, it would be worthwhile to examine how the theme of rich and poor is related to these conflict situations. In the following, those passages concerning the problem of rich and poor will be explored. Since 1:9–10 is usually regarded as the introduction for the theme in subsequent passages, for the sake of brevity, the investigation would start with 2:1–7.

3.6.1 Partiality among the Faith Community (Jas 2:1–7)

Jas 2:1–7 consists of the first extended discourse on the topic of rich and poor in James. The issue at stake is announced at the beginning of the section, namely, partiality (προσωπολημψία). The word is not found in the LXX or in contemporary

[180] Baker, *Personal Speech-Ethics*, 285, Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 205.
[181] See Wall, *Community of the Wise*, 260 and Christopher Church, "A 'Complete' Ethics: James' Practical Theology," *RevExp* 108 (2011): 412.
[182] Patrick J. Hartin, "Exegesis and Proclamation: 'Come now, you rich, weep and wail...' (James 5:1 - 6)," *JTSA* 84 (1993): 57.
[183] Pierre Keith, "Les destinataires de l'épitre de Jacques," *FoiVie* 102 (2003): 25.
[184] See above sections 2.1.3.

secular Greek texts.[185] It is suggested that the word comes from the Hebrew phrase נשׂא פנים, which is used in Lev 19:15 in the context of judicial cases.[186] Besides its occurrence in James, the word appears three times in the NT (Rom 2:11, Eph 6:9; Col 3:25), each time it is used in descriptions of God, who is without partiality in his judgment. Hence, James here is contrasting the partiality of human with the impartiality of God.

After the propositional statement in 2:1, James uses an illustration to elaborate his admonition against partiality (2:2–4). Several exegetical questions surround this illustration. The most fundamental question is whether the illustration is only a fabricated example or does reflect the actual situation of the audience. Dibelius holds that 2:2–4 is only hypothetical without any concern for its reality and hence without any relation to the situation of the audience.[187] Kloppenborg even described the scenario as a "joke" that exposes the fragility and contingency of status hierarchies.[188] On the other extreme, Martin regards the illustration as an example of the "iterative case in present time."[189] Most commentators, however, take the middle position. While regarding the example as hypothetical, they maintain that it reflects circumstances with which the audience is familiar.[190] Given that James is sent to a real audience with some concrete purposes, it would be "hard to imagine that an author would simply craft such a polemic ... unless he or she had been provoked by some sort of social problem related to wealth, or perhaps seen the problem emerging on the horizon."[191] It may be added that in a society where poverty was the condition of the majority and the rich people were honoured, it would be very likely that the

[185] See BDAG, s.v. προσωπολημψία.
[186] Johnson, *James*, 221.
[187] Dibelius, *James*, 128–30. See also a similar view in Bauckham, *James*, 27, 59.
[188] John S. Kloppenborg, "Poverty and Piety in Mattew, James, and the Didache," in *Matthew, James and Didache*, eds. Huub van de Sandt and Jürgen K. Zangenberg (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 232.
[189] Martin, *James*, 60–61. Wall also tends to see the illustration as an actual event. See Wall, *Community of the Wise*, 103.
[190] So Allison, *James*, 377–38, McKnight, *James*, 180–81, Davids, *James*, 107, McCartney, *James*, 137–38, Laws, *James*, 98, Hartin, *James*, 117, Moo, *James*, 102, Brosend, *James and Jude*, 61–62, Lockett, *Purity and Worldview*, 16, Maynard-Reid, *Poverty and Wealth*, 53, Watson, "James 2," 120, Mongstad-Kvammen, *Postcolonial Reading*, 119–52, Ahn, "Social Justice," 36.
[191] Batten, *Friendship and Benediction*, 129. Watson, though cautious about reconstructing the precise situation behind the rhetoric, affirms that partiality is exhibited by the audience. See Watson, "James 2," 120–21.

attitude illustrated in 2:2–4 was held by some of the believers. Furthermore, commenting Jas 2:1–13 from a socio-rhetorical perspective, Wachob claims that:

> [b]ecause the language employed in a rhetorical discourse is a social possession that is fundamentally related to its rhetorical situation and because that situation is a social context, the language of rhetorical discourse has a "texture" that offers clues to the social environment or the location of the thought that stands behind and within it.[192]

In other words, although one cannot directly grasp the actual social situation by the rhetoric of James, there are still enough links between the text and its background for interpreters to trace some information about the social environment that prompts the production of that text. Hence, it would be valid to see 2:2–4 as reflecting some social situation of the audience.

Another exegetical problem of 2:2–4 concerns the nature of the assembly described.[193] Traditional interpretations regard the assembly as a worship meeting.[194] However, since Ward put forward his argument that the setting of the assembly is a judicial court meeting for settling community disputes,[195] many followed his view.[196] It is possible that the author was thinking of a court meeting when he penned the example. However, Moo observes that a plural noun for partiality (προσωπολημψίαις) is used in 2:1. Hence, it does not refer to a single event, but "acts of favoritism" (NRSV), pointing to a wide-ranging application.[197] Therefore, the concern of James'

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[192] Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, 155.

[193] Though the word συναγωγή in 2:2 can refer to the building of assembly, most commentators understand it as referring to some Christian or Jewish assembly. See for example Hartin, *James*, 118. See also the summary in J. Harold Greenlee, *An Exegetical Summary of James* (Dallas, TX: SIL International, 1993), 70–71. The event of the rich and the poor described also suggest a setting of an assembly.

[194] H. Ewald, *Das Sendschreiben an die Hebräer und Jakobos' Rundschreiben* (Göttingen: Dieterich, 1870), 195, Max Meinertz, "Der Jakobusbrief," in *Die Katholischen Briefe*, eds. Max Meinertz and Wilhelm Vrede (Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1932),28, Dibelius, *James*, 132–34, Vouga, *Saint Jacques*, 71, Adamson, *James*, 105, McCartney, *James*, 138, Moo, *James*, 103, McKnight, *James*, 182–83.

[195] Roy B. Ward, "Partiality in the Assembly: James 2:2–4," *HTR* 62 (1969): 87–97, and Roy B. Ward, "The Communal Concern of the Epistle of James," (PhD dissertation, Harvard University, 1966). However, Allison observes that such interpretation has already appeared in some old exegetical works in 17th and 18th centuries. See Dale C. Allison, "Exegetical Amnesia in James," *ETL* 76 (2000): 162–65.

[196] So Davids, *James*, 108, Martin, *James*, 61, Hartin, *James*, 118, Johnson, *James*, 221. Allison also supports a judicial interpretation, though he regards it as a Jewish meeting rather than a Christian one. See Allison, *James*, 386.

[197] Moo, *James*, 102.

admonition here should not be restricted to court judgments. Moreover, Brosend comments correctly that the emphasis of the passage is not on the type of gathering, but the believers' treatment of other people.[198] The illustration in 2:2–4 functions as a dramatic expression of partiality, which reflects the attitude and behaviour of the audience.

Another related exegetical issue is the identity of the rich person in the illustration. The concrete rank of that character must be left to speculation.[199] However, it is still relevant to discuss whether the rich man is supposed to be a non-Christian stranger to the assembly or a Christian member of the community. Some commentators maintain that the rich man is a Christian,[200] perhaps a new convert,[201] but more regard him as an outsider.[202] The latter view is supported not only by his being shown to his seat, but also by the description of the rich as oppressors of Christian communities in 2:6–7 and the negative depictions of the rich elsewhere in James (1:10–11; 4:13–5:6). With the background of patron-client system in the Greco-Roman world, it is probable that the community would regard the rich person as a potential patron, even if he is not a Christian.[203] Nevertheless, there are reasons

[198] Brosend, *James and Jude*, 58.

[199] For example, Laws, *James*, 98 suggests that the gold-ring of the rich man shows that he is an equestrian. This view finds support in Mongstad-Kvammen, *Postcolonial Reading*, 126–28. Reicke, *James*, 27 regards the man as a Roman politician trying to influence the church. See also Bo Reicke, *Diakonie, Festfreude und Zelos, in Verbindung mit der altchristlichen Agapenfeier*, UUÅ 5 (Uppsala: Lundequistska bokhandeln, 1951), 342–43. Edwin A. Judge, *The Social Pattern of the Christian Groups in the First Century* (London: Tyndale Press, 1960), 53 suggests that the man is a "big businessman". All these must remains speculations, since the descriptions in the text do not give enough information for the rank of the rich man.

[200] Ward, "Partiality," 96–97, Franz Schnider, *Der Jakobusbrief*, RNT (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1987), 58, Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora*, 106, Paul H. Furley, "ΠΛΟΥΣΙΟΣ and Cognates in the New Testament," *CBQ* 5 (1943): 251.

[201] Martin, *James*, 62, Moo, *James*, 103, Hubert Frankemölle, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, ÖTK 17 (Gütersloh: Gütersloher, 1994), 387–88.

[202] So Windisch, *Die Katholischen Brief*, 14, Easton, "James," 36, Patrick J. Hartin, "The Poor in the Epistle of James and the Gospel of Thomas," *HvTSt* 53 (1997): 150, Wall, *Community of the Wise*, 112, Christoph Burchard, "Gemeinde in der strohernen Epistel," in *Kirche: Festschrift für Günther Bornkamm zum 75. Geburtstag*, eds. Dieter Lührmann and Georg Strecker (Tübingen: Mohr, 1980), 323, Cartinat, *Saint Jacques*, 130–31, Penner, *James and Eschatology*, 270. Moreover, Laws, *James*, 99–100, Tasker, *James*, 57, Ropes, *James*, 191, and Brosend, *James and Jude*, 58 argue that both the rich and poor men are visitors to the meeting. Countryman even suggests that the rich man is a Sadducee. See L. William Countryman, *The Rich Christian in the Church of the Early Empire: Contradictions and Accommodations*, TSR 7 (New York: Edwin Mellen, 1980), 82–83.

[203] Nicholas Taylor points out that patrons of Christian groups would not necessarily have been Christians themselves, and their bestowal of protection and support would not necessarily have been motivated by conviction so much as by the patron's need of clients. See Nicholas H. Taylor, "The

to suggest that James does not depict the rich man in 2:2–4 merely as an outsider. First, in the episode the rich man is not directly referred to as πλούσιος, but is described only by his clothes. Davids suggests that it is a circumlocution used to prevent a direct association of this man with the label "rich", and hence wealthy Christians are meant.[204] Second, it is evident that there are some rich Christians in the early church (Acts 17:4, 12. 1 Cor 11:21–22 also reflects existence of rich Christians in the congregation).[205] Hence the presence of rich members will not be impossible for the audience of James. Third, the audience is not identified automatically as the poor, since both the poor and the rich in 2:2–7 are spoken in the third person, in contrast to the second person address to the audience.[206] Therefore, the tension between the poor and the rich should not be viewed simply as a conflict between insiders and outsiders of the faith community. It can possibly hint at an intra-communal problem.[207] The audience's attitude towards wealth and rich people, including both fellow Christians and outsiders, can affect the relationship within the community.

With such an understanding of the passage, one can sort out some of the community situations reflected in it. Wall is correct to assert that "class conflict" is at issue.[208] However, it is not simply that the poor believers are oppressed by the rich non-believers. Sociologists observe that individual mobility is one way for disadvantaged groups to deal with their negative distinctiveness with respect to outgroups.[209] Despite the fact that upward class movement is difficult in the Greco-Roman world, the socially disadvantaged could still use what power they have to

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Social Nature of Conversion in the Early Christian World," in *Modelling Early Christianity: Social-Scientific Studies of the New Testament in Its Context*, ed. Philip F. Esler (London: Routledge, 1995), 131. See also N.J. Vhymeister, "The Rich Man in James 2: Does Ancient Patronage Illumine the Text?" *AUSS* 33 (1995): 265–83.

[204] Davids, *James*, 108.

[205] Judge, *Social Pattern*, 59–61, 69, 127–34 claims that the early church included a small number of influential and relatively high-status people. See also Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*, 2nd ed. (New Haven, CN; London: Yale University, 2003), 51–73.

[206] Allison, *James*, 376. See also Lockett, "Strong and Weak Lines," 399 and Bauckham, *James*, 188.

[207] Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, 182.

[208] Wall, *Community of the Wise*, 111. Sociological studies suggest that classes represent the principle contradictions in a society. See David D. Gilmore, "Anthropology of the Mediterranean Area," *ARA* 11 (1982): 186.

[209] Tajfel and Turner, "Social Identity Theory," 19.

position themselves socially and materially closer to the advantaged groups in order to gain access to greater privilege. Especially, in agrarian societies such as the Roman Empire, the power and privilege of a class usually covers a range of the spectrum.[210] Hence, even one may not be able to move to a higher class, it is still possible to improve one's social status within the same class. This motivates people to adhere to the more privileged groups. Hearon suggest that this is probably what is happening among James' audience.[211] Since it is likely that the majority of James' audience consists of members neither at the top nor at the bottom of socio-economic classes,[212] the desire to gain better social position and greater privilege would pose two aspects of danger to them. Firstly, in a world of limited good, it would lead to competitions for resources. This could be one of the factors, or even the direct reason for the wars and fightings in 4:1–3. It also causes the faith community to be increasingly influenced by rich members among them, or even by rich outsiders who may provide benefits to them.[213] Furthermore, this would promote envy, self-ambition and partisanship within believers (3:14). Secondly, the inclination towards the rich is naturally coupled with contempt for the poor, since the tendency to move socially upward will create a tendency to dissociate oneself from fellow members of lower social status.[214] As the majority of the community is drawn towards the rich, they are also drawn away from their traditional acceptance of the poor.[215] Hence, the poor will become marginalized in the community. This seriously threatens communal unity and the wholeness of Christian faith.[216] As a result, subgroups will be formed within the Christian community. In light of social identity theory, once subgroups are formed, members of the other (sub)groups will be regarded as a threat to one's own

[210] Lenski, *Power and Privilege*, 284–85.
[211] Holly E. Hearon, "'But Be Doers of the Word': Power and Privilege in James," *Encounter* 72.1 (2011): 86.
[212] Popkes, *Adressaten*, 53–55. See also Hearon, "Power and Privilege," 83–84. In fact, in advanced agrarian societies, of which the Roman Empire is an example, most people fell somewhere between the extremes of the society, both in social status and wealth. See Patrick Nolan and Gerhard Lenski, *Human Societies: An Introduction to Macrosociology*, 11th edition (London: Paradigm Publishers, 2011), 170–71.
[213] Patterson finds evidence that some wealthy people attempted to gain attention and allegiance of the early church. See Stephen J. Patterson, *The Gospel of Thomas and Jesus* (Sonoma: Polebridge, 1993), 182.
[214] Tajfel and Turner, "Social Identity Theory," 19.
[215] Hartin, "Poor in the Epistle of James," 159.
[216] Cain H. Felder, "Partiality and God's Law: An Exegesis of James 2:1–13," *JRT* 39 (1982–83): 57–59. A concrete example of marginalized groups causing conflict within the early church can be seen in Acts 6:1.

(sub)group. This may also be behind the slandering in 4:11–12 and the grumbling against each other in 5:9. Even worse, in the situation of Jas 2, the subgroups formed will consist of a privileged richer group dominating the community, even jeopardizing the benefits of the poor disadvantaged group. Such circumstances could easily build up hostility within the faith community, causing even more severe division.

Such understanding of the passage will also shed light on the interpretation of the phrase διεκρίθητε ἐν ἑαυτοῖς in 2:4. The verb διακρίνω can mean either having divided thoughts within oneself or actively making distinctions among people.[217] This verb is also used in 1:6. The middle/passive voice of the verb in James, as well as its connection with the concept of double-mindedness (1:8), suggest that the first meaning is likely in Jas 2:4.[218] However, in view of the conflict situations among the audience and the community concern of the author, it is also possible that a meaning of division in the community is present here.[219] This sense becomes even more probable as one notes that within agrarian societies, people are more easily adapted to people of the same class from another group than to people of another class in the same group.[220] This means that even though members of the early church from different classes formed one community based on their common faith, the cultural and social rifts between them make it likely that divisions still existed within the community. Therefore, the dividedness within individual believers also becomes a force that splits the community apart.[221] Hence, actions of partiality are not merely sins within individual believers, but also lead to social problems that can ultimately destroy the faith community.[222] Attitudes of partiality within individuals as well as among the whole community as a group towards the rich contribute much to the conflicts among James' audience.

[217] BDAG, s.v. διακρίνω.
[218] So Mayor, *James*, 85, Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 119, Laws, *James*, 102, Ropes, *James*, 192, Joseph Chaine, *L'Épître de Saint Jacques*, Études Bibliques (Paris: Gabalda, 1927), 44, Moo, *James*, 104.
[219] So Davids, *James*, 110, Cantinat, *Saint Jacques*, 125, Wall, *Community of the Wise*, 113, Martin, *James*, 63, McKnight, *James*, 188–89. Most English versions also translate the phrase as "make distinctions among yourselves", conveying a sense of division in the community. For example: ESV, NASB, NET, NIV, NJB, NRSV, REB, NLT, TEV.
[220] Nolan and Lenski, *Human Societies*, 145–46, 170–71.
[221] Hartin, *Spirituality of Perfection*, 104.
[222] Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, 160.

3.6.2 Effective and Dead Faith (Jas 2:14–26)

The next passage to be considered is 2:14–26. This passage is surrounded by theological as well as exegetical problems. However, for the purpose of this chapter, only a few remarks will be made on the illustration in 2:15–16.

Although the change of topic from partiality (2:1–13) to the relation between faith and work (2:14–26), as well as the vocative ἀδελφοί μου in 2:14, signify a beginning of a new unit, there are still some connections between the two halves of Jas 2 that indicate a continuity of thought. Allison suggests that the illustration in 2:15–16 is an example of showing mercy in 2:13.[223] Cheung also noted verbal and thematic links between 2:8–13 and 2:14–26.[224] Moreover, the example in 2:15–16, which concerns those in poverty, recalls the theme of wealth and poverty in 2:1–7.[225] In particular, the construction of 2:15–16 parallels the example in 2:2–4.[226] Furthermore, the theme of faith in 2:14–26 recalls ἔχετε τὴν πίστιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν in 2:1. These connections suggest that the theme of faith and work should not be regarded as a completely new topic disconnected from the previous section. Instead, it is a continuation and generalization of the themes of partiality, law and mercy in 2:1–13. In particular, the example in 2:15–16 can be regarded as an exhibition of partiality, which is the main theme in 2:1–7.[227] The author's use of an example about the poor as an illustration of faith without work is significant in the context of Jas 2.

The example describes a brother or a sister, meaning some member of the faith community in physical needs. The descriptions of this person reveal the extremity of his or her poverty, even to the point of a life-or-death situation.[228] In

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[223] Allison, *James*, 462. Wall, *Community of the Wise*, 133 also claims that the example illustrates the theology of 2:12–13.

[224] Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 74.

[225] Wall, *Community of the Wise*, 135.

[226] The structural parallels consists of ἐάν followed by a subjunctive introduction which is a description of unethical situation, and then followed by words of response to the situation. See Hartin, *James*, 150 and Allison, *James*, 463.

[227] Watson, "James 2," 120. Ward also observes that the example of Abraham is an example of mercy deeds in contrast to acts of partiality, thus connecting 2:14–26 to 2:1–13. See Roy B. Ward, "The Works of Abraham: James 2:14–26," *HTR* 61 (1968): 283–90.

[228] Adamson argues that the use of the verb ὑπάρχω instead of εἰμί denotes a continuous state. Hence the person is the example is in a habitual hunger. See Adamson, *James*, 122–23 and BDAG, s.v. ὑπάρχω. However, Adamson himself notes that this sense of ὑπάρχω is lost in later Greek. Hence it would be hard to establish this sense from the choice of the verb alone. Nevertheless, given that

contrast to the urgency of this situation, the depicted response of another member consists only of a verbal answer: ὑπάγετε ἐν εἰρήνῃ, θερμαίνεσθε καὶ χορτάζεσθε (Go in peace, be warmed and filled). The verbs θερμαίνεσθε and χορτάζεσθε can either be middle[229] or passive.[230] If they are taken as divine passives, then the response could be understood as a prayer for God's supplying the person in need.[231] By itself this seems like an appropriate response, a common blessing between Jews. However, such a prayer is shown in James as hypocritical, revealing an attitude of irresponsibility hiding behind a sham religious piety.[232] For James, in pressing situations of need, only concrete actions that correspond to the pressing difficulty are appropriate responses from a member of the faith community.

Like the case of 2:2–4, there are diverse views on how the example in 2:15–16 is related to actual situations of the audience. Martin maintains that it depicts a real situation in the church.[233] Dibelius, on the contrary, regards it as merely a hypothetical example with no connection to real or potential situations of the audience.[234] Again, most commentators take the middle path, asserting that it is a hypothetical example that reflects familiar or even typical experiences of the believers.[235] This seems to be the most plausible position. In particular, the phrase ἐξ ὑμῶν in 2:16 conveys the idea that the author regards the example as a possible situation among his audience.[236]

Three inferences can be made from this illustration. First, it indicates that the author supposes that most members of his audience can share with the needy.[237] This again confirms the observation that most of James' audience are somewhere between the top and the bottom of the socio-economic system. Second, the occurrence of two

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constant poverty was the common experience of many people in the Mediterranean world, it is still probable that James means the person is constantly in hunger.

[229] Martin, *James*, 85, the translations of NIV, NAB, NET, NJB, NRSV.

[230] For example: ESV, NASB, KJV, NKJ, RSV.

[231] Laws, *James*, 121.

[232] Allison, *James*, 466, Martin, *James*, 85. Johnson, *James*, 239.

[233] Martin, *James* 84. See also similar views in Reicke, *James*, 32, Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 116, and Wiard Popkes, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, THKNT 14 (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2001), 192.

[234] Dibelius, *James*, 152–53.

[235] So Moo, *James*, 124, Hartin, *James*, 157–58, Davids, *James*, 121.

[236] McCartney, *James*, 156.

[237] Laws, *James*, 120, Allison, *James*, 462.

consecutive illustrations in Jas 2, both related to the presence of poor people in the faith community, indicates that the problem of poverty is a key concern of the author. Partiality and mercy are not discussed as abstract concepts, but are related directly to believers' honouring the poor and concretely supplying their needs. This means that the actual life situation of the faith community is at the focus of the teachings in Jas 2, even if the illustrations used are not direct reports of actual instances among the audience. Third, if the illustration reflects the author's view of his audience, then it means that some members of the faith community are taking an indifferent attitude towards those in need among them. Such a situation is plausible in view of the admonition to partiality in 2:1–13, which is likely an actual problem of the audience, as discussed above. Therefore, 2:15–16 provides a further support for the view that there is danger of polarization among the audience as the majority of the members inclines towards wealthy people, marginalizing those most in need among them, and thus threatening the unity of the community.

3.6.3 Arrogance and Wickedness of the Rich (Jas 4:13–5:6)

Jas 4:13–5:6 contains two pericopes (4:13–17; 5:1–6). Two features suggest that they should be taken together.[238] First, both passages concerns attitudes and behaviours of rich people. Second, they both begin with the phrase ἄγε νῦν, which does not appear elsewhere in the NT or in the LXX. In view of these connections, the two pericopes will be considered together here. These two passages, together with the admonition against slandering in 4:11–12, form a series of examples of arrogant behaviours which illustrate the call to repent in Jas 4:6–10.[239] They also provide the context for the exhortation to patience in 5:7–11. Hence these pericopes should not be considered as isolated.[240] Instead, they have to be viewed as part of James' continuous concern for the life of the faith community. It is for the wholeness of the

[238] However, not every commentators agree with the unity of 4:13–5:6. For example, Martin, *James*, 172 regards 5:1–6 as an independent section since a second audience group is evidently envisaged other than that of 4:13–17, though he claims that it is wrong to make a sharp disjunction between 5:1–6 and the foregoing sections. Nevertheless, McKnight, *James*, 383–84 argues that the two passages are directed to the same audience. Moreover, in view of the clear structural and thematic similarities of the two passage, it is best to regard 4:13–5:6 as a whole unit consisting of two subsections that address two different sorts of sinful behaviours.

[239] Johnson, *James*, 292.

[240] Contra Dibelius, *James*, 230. He sees no connection between 4:13–5:6 and 4:7–12. Davids also claims that 4:13–5:6 is a separate unit, though he admits that the flow of thought moves smoothly enough from 4:1–12 to 4:13–5:6. See Davids, *James*, 171.

audience that James rebukes the rich people's arrogance and their oppression of the poor, proclaiming their sins and announcing their judgment.

One most debated question about these passages is whether those rich people reproached are Christians or not. Cheung is certainly correct in observing that "rich" and "poor" are stereotypes in James.[241] Hence the terms may not necessarily refer to specific groups. However, the question still remains whether the passages were intended only to reprimand those wicked wealthy people *outside* the faith community or the author regarded such wicked behaviours as also present among community members. The hostile language used, especially in 5:1–6, as well as the absence of the vocative ἀδελφοί, lead many to regard the passages to be referring only to outsiders. [242] However, several reasons prompt a reconsideration of such interpretations. Consider first the merchants in 4:13–17. Although Hartin states that "[i]t is hard to imagine the Christian community of that early stage being made up of business people,"[243] such a comment does not rule out the possibility that James' audience could contain some members who are merchants. Moreover, Davids observes that the merchants are not referred to directly as "the rich" as in 5:1. He therefore claims that this circumlocution indicates that James sees the merchants as within the faith community.[244] Martin further suggests that the appeal to Lord's will in 4:15 points to professed members of the congregation.[245] In addition, there is a verbal link between "boast" in 4:16 (καυχάομαι) and in 3:14 (κατακαυχάομαι).[246] Since the boasting in 3:14 is addressed to those among the audience who claims to be wise, it is possible that the boasting in 4:16 also has in view incorrect attitudes of some members of the faith community.

[241] Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 263.
[242] Laws, *James*, 190, Hartin, *James*, 223, 226, Ropes, *James*, 282, Mussner, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 189, McKnight, *James*, 381, Maynard-Reid, *Poverty and Wealth*, 70–75, Burchard, *Der Jakobusbrief*, 181–82, Popkes, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 284–313, George H. Guthrie, *James*, EBC 13 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 260–61, George Peck, "James 5:1–6," *Int* 42 (1988): 294, O.E. Alana, "A Word with the Rich (James 5:1–6): Part II," *VE* 24 (2003): 301. Davids and Moo also regard the landlords in 5:1–6 to be outsiders, though they are not so sure about the merchants in 4:13–17. See Davids, *James*, 174 and Moo, *James*, 201.
[243] Hartin, *James*, 223.
[244] Davids, *James*, 171.
[245] Martin, *James*, 165. Moo and McKnight summarize the Christian perspectives in 4:13–16. See Moo, *James*, 201 and McKnight, *James*, 369.
[246] In some manuscripts, 3:14 has καυχάομαι instead of κατακαυχάομαι. See the critical note in NA[28].

Turning to 5:1–6, it seems that this passage more clearly refers to outsiders, since the rebuke is much sharper. Yet Frankemölle, appealing to the unity of 4:13–5:6 and the perceived Christian referent of 4:13–17, argues that 5:1–6 refer also to Christians.[247] Although Frankemölle's argument is usually rejected since two groups of people are typically perceived in 4:13–17 and 5:1–6, there are still further reasons to support the view that rich members of the audience are not totally out of sight in the latter passage. First, Schökel observes an *inclusio* formed by ἀντιτάσσω in 4:6 and 5:6.[248] Based on this observation, Schökel argues that 4:13–5:6 expounds the first half of Prov 3:34 quoted in Jas 4:6.[249] Since 4:7–10, which expounds the second half of Prov 3:34, is likely a call for repentance to the believers, it is possible that 4:13–5:6 also includes believers in view. Second, there are verbal links between 5:1 and 4:9. Though many commentators observe that the words κλαίω (weep) and ταλαιπωρία (misery) in 5:1 echoes the vocabularies of 4:9 (κλαίω, ταλαιπωρέω), few have observed the significance of this link for the unity of thought in the two passages. Rather, most interpreters regard the words as functioning differently in 4:9 and 5:1, since they see no call to repentance in 5:1–6.[250] However, it must be noted that in 4:1–10, the author also addresses his audience with harsh languages such as adulteresses (4:4), sinners and double-minded(4:8). The call to repentance in 4:7–10 is also comparable to the prophetic call for repentance in the Old Testament.[251] Moreover, it should be noted that the prophetic denouncement in the Old Testament, which Jas 5:1–6 resembles, rebukes the wicked rich Israelites *as members of God's people*.[252] Hence the harsh language in 5:1–6 and the absence of explicit call to

[247] Frankemölle, *Der Brief des Jakobus*, 630–32.

[248] L. Alonso Schökel, "James 5:2 [*sic*] and 4:6," *Bib* 54 (1973): 73–74. His observation is endorsed by Reese, "Exegete as Sage," 82, 84, Penner, *James and Eschatology*, 155, Taylor and Guthrie, "Structure of James," 685–87, 700.

[249] Schökel, "James 5:2," 74. Kloppenborg also regards 4:13–5:6 as a contrasting panel for 3:13–4:10,thus not entirely discontinuous with the preceding section. See Johns S. Kloppenborg, "The Emulation of the Jesus Tradition in the Letter of James." In *Reading James with New Eyes*, eds. Robert L. Webb and John S. Kloppenborg, LNTS 342 (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 137–39.

[250] Ropes, *James*, 283, Hartin, *James*, 226, Moo, *James*, 201. On the other hand, Allison, *James*, 647, 668 sees the connection between the two passages, but he regards those rebuked in 4:13–5:6 as non-Christian Jews among James' audience.

[251] Walter T. Wilson, "Turning Words: James 4:7–10 and the Rhetoric of Repentance," in *Antiquity and Humanity: Essays on Ancient Religion and Philosophy*, eds. Adela Yarbro Collins and Margaret M. MItchell (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 358–77.

[252] One example can be seen in Amos 3:1–2. In that passage the relation between Israel being God's people and God's punishment on them is expressed by עַל־כֵּן in MT and διὰ τοῦτο in LXX. Amos announces God's judgment to Israel because they are God's chosen. See Francis I. Andersen and

repentance does not necessarily exclude a sense of calling for repentance. Third, if 4:11–5:6 forms one unit consisting of three consecutive examples of arrogant behaviours, as argued by Johnson, then the vocative ἀδελφοί in 4:11 would govern all the three sub-units.[253] Fourth, Johnson observes that 4:17, which he regards as a hinge between 4:13–16 and 5:1–6, recalls 1:22–27 and 2:14–26 through the theme of knowledge without matched action.[254] Since both 1:22–27 and 2:14–26 are clearly addressed to those who at least claim to be believers, it is also likely that the rebuke in 5:1–6 also includes members of the audience, though the author may not regard them as true Christians. Finally, the letter's ethical concern for the whole community, which is dominant in other parts of James, deem it probable that 4:13–5:6 focuses still on the ethics of the faith community. Friesen's observation that James reflects primarily on local conditions, without addressing larger issues of empire or social discourse, also indicates such a community concern.[255] The sinful behaviours and the judgment of the rich are not just stated as negative examples for believers, but the author sees real danger that some members of his audience may be committing such sins.

In view of these arguments, it is plausible that "community members who have means" are at least included in the reproaches in 4:13–5:6, which intend to warn them not to rely too much on their worldly wealth and means, since this will lead them into "greedy, selfish, and violent behavior that characterizes the typical rich who are outsiders."[256] James is not against wealth *per se*, but reproaches "those who

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David N. Freedman, *Amos*, AB 24A (New York: Doubleday, 1989), 378–83. Furthermore, commenting on the conceptual coherence of Micah, Jacobs concludes that the concepts of justice, judgment and hope are all present and shaped by Israel's relation with God, with hope rather than judgment as the final word. See Mignon R. Jacobs, *The Conceptual Coherence of the Book of Micah*, JSOTSup 322 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 222–23. These observations show that harsh reproaching language in prophetic denouncement does not preclude the identity as God's people of those rebuked. See also H.H. Drake Williams, III, "Of Rags and Riches: The Benefits of Hearing Jeremiah 9:23–24 within James 1:9–11," *TynBul* 53 (2002): 281.

[253] Johnson, *James*, 291–92. See also Kloppenborg, "Emulation," 137–38.

[254] Johnson, *James*, 298.

[255] Steven J. Friesen, "Injustice or God's Will? Explanations of Poverty in Proto-Christian Communities," in *Christian Origins*, ed. Richard A. Horsley, PHC 1 (Minneaplois: Fortress Press ,2005), 244.

[256] Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, 182. See also John A. Burns, "James, the Wisdom of Jesus," *CTR* 1.1 (1986): 130. Konradt sees both a call to repent to community members and a pronouncement of Judgment for the non-believing rich. See Matthias Konradt, *Christliche Existenz nach dem*

have gained wealth by fraud and even at the expense of other people's lives (5:4–6).”[257] These wealthy people could form at most a minority of the audience,[258] yet the potential harm of this minority to the whole community can be enormous. Harsh language is needed to rebuke these perpetrators, especially since perpetrators tend to underestimate the damage of their actions.[259] In light of other passages of James already discussed above, three aspects of effects of these rich members on the faith community can be conceived. First, the extravagance of the rich will stimulate the desires in other members of the community. This cause competitions and conflicts among the audience (4:1–3).[260] Second, the rich can easily dominate the community through the power of their wealth, drawing other members towards them, thus marginalizing the most needed members of the group (2:1–7). This worsens the division among the audience. Third, if oppression of the poor members of the community comes from rich members of the same community, such behaviours which are incompatible with the Christian faith they claim to have can induce serious cognitive dissonance in other group members.[261] This weakens the sense of belonging, and thus jeopardizing the cohesiveness of the community. Therefore, the reproaches of the rich in 4:13–5:6 are closely related to the conflict and disorder among James’ audience.

3.6.4 Concluding Summary

The contrast and tension between the rich and the poor form a recurring theme in James. While it is true that the descriptions and illustrations on the conflicts between the rich and the poor should not be taken as reports of occurrences among the audience, but rather as hypothetical references composed for the purpose of ethical instruction,[262] they should not be viewed as merely “wisdom themes or a free-floating piece of paraenesis” either, but exhortations addressing “real human beings

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Jakobusbrief: Eine Studie zu seiner soteriologischen und ethischen Konzeption, SUNT 22 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), 148–49.

[257] Dockery, “True Piety,” 59. See also Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Theology* (Leicester: IVP, 1981), 930 and D.K. Adie, “Christian View of Wealth,” *EDT* 5:1159–63.

[258] Allison, *James*, 648.

[259] Roy E. Baumeister et. al., “Victim and Perpetrator Accounts of Interpersonal Conflict: Autobiographical Narratives About Anger,” *JPSP* 59 (1990): 994–1005.

[260] Brosend, *James and Jude*, 113 asserts that conflicts in 4:1–10 was grounded in socioeconomic distinctions between the haves and the have-nots.

[261] Norton et. al., “Vicarious Dissonance,” 47.

[262] Lockett, *Purity and Worldview*, 16.

in specific social settings."[263] In James, one can see "possible tension over pretention and economic diversity ... Those who are rich have provoked dissension."[264] The several passages in James on the theme of rich and poor reflect a community with diversified social strata. Some of the rich members might be behaving like those wealthy non-believers, boasting about their power with their wealth (4:13–17), or even involving in the oppression of the poor (5:1–6). On the other hand, the majority of the audience, posited somewhere between the top and the bottom of economic conditions, were influenced by and drawn to the rich, even to the extent of neglecting those members most in need (Jas 2). This caused corruption and division among the community, a situation that James had to tackle urgently.

3.7 Testing and Suffering in James

Before this chapter concludes, some remarks on the theme of testing, or suffering, which is introduced at the beginning of Jas 1, will be made in light of the conflict situations among James' audience explored above. Jas 1 is usually regarded as the introduction of the whole letter, though there is no complete consensus on the delimitation of the introduction.[265] Jas 1 introduces essentially all the topics in the latter parts of the letter.[266] In particular, the schematic statements in 1:26–27 neatly anticipate the main themes that follows:[267] controlling the tongue (Jas 3), looking after the poor (Jas 2), and keeping oneself unstained from the world (Jas 4–5). The theme of testing (πειρασμός) appears in 1:2, right after the opening salutation, and recurs in 1:12–18. Though the word πειρασμός does not appear again after Jas 1, the

[263] Johnson, "Social World," 109, 122. Though Johnson is cautious about a reductionistic interpretation of James as merely reflecting economic status of the readers, he nevertheless agree that James concerns real situations of the audience.
[264] J. Andrew Overman, "Problems with Pluralism in the Second Temple Judaism: Matthew, James, and the Didache in Their Jewish-Roman Milieu," in *Matthew, James and Didache*, eds. Huub van de Sandt and Jürgen K. Zangenberg (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 267.
[265] Main suggestions for the delimitation of the prologue include 1:2–12, 1:2–18, and 1:2–27. For a summary and discussion of the views, see Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 61–67.
[266] For a summary, see Allison, *James*, 79 and Luke T. Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 451–52. Repschinski comments that "the careful chainlinking of the whole of Jas 1 through catchwords suggests that the author saw the seemingly disparate material as somehow connected." See Boris Repschinski, S. J. "Purity in Matthew, James, and the Didache," in *Mathew, James, and Didache*, eds. Huub van de Sandt and Jürgen K. Zangenberg (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 389.
[267] Christopher W. Morgan, *A Theology of James: Wisdom for God's People* (Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2010), 21. See also Taylor and Guthrie, "Structure of James," 687 and Verseput, "James 1:19–27," 436–39.

theme of testing, or suffering caused by the testing, underlies much of the rest of the epistle and forms a thread which ties the epistle together.[268] There are various understandings on the meaning of testing in James. Traditionally, the testing in Jas 1 is regarded as coming from religious persecution.[269] However, there is no indications in the letter that the audience is facing acute religious persecution.[270] Rather, it is more likely that the testing in James refers to the trials believers encounter in everyday life.[271] Testing can involve both attacks from without and temptation from within the believers.[272] However, it seems that James is more concerned on the internal issues, as the author stresses that the testing, or temptation, comes from the believers' own desire (1:14).[273] Such testing has caused some believers to go astray from the way of truth (5:19).

Since in Jas 1 the author has not specified what kind of testing he has in mind, it can be interpreted very generally as referring to "every kind of trial or situation of adversity that could befall the believer."[274] However, as McKnight asserts, testing in James need not be taken to include everything an interpreter wants to include.[275] Rather, the content of the rest of the letter should inform one's interpretation of the testing in Jas 1.[276] In this vein, one suggestion is that the testing in James consists mainly of economic oppressions, since the topic of rich and poor is prominent in the letter.[277] However, Moo points out correctly that considerable amount of material in

[268] Davids, *James*, 35.
[269] So Mayor, *James*, 33, Ropes, *James*, 133, Dibelius, *James*, 71, Martin, *James*, 15.
[270] Marie E. Isaacs, "Suffering in the Lives of Christians: James 1:2-19a," *RevExp* 97 (2000): 184, Davids, *James*, 37. Dibelius also observes that Jas nowhere indicates that he is writing during stirring period of persecution, but he maintains that the author wants to revive again the heroic sentiment of the periods of persecutions. See Dibelius, *James*, 70–71. His view is followed by Adamson. See Adamson, *The Man and His Message*, 310.
[271] Laws, *James*, 52.
[272] Johnson, *James*, 177. Adamson, *James*, 53 claims that one should not distinguish between external and internal temptations, since the two are interwoven with each other.
[273] Thurén, "Risky Rhetoric," 276, Kaden, "Stoicism," 103, Jens Schröter, "Jesus Tradition in Mattew, James, and the Didache: Searching for Characteristic Emphases." In *Mathew, James, and Didache*, eds. Huub van de Sandt and Jürgen K. Zangenberg (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 243.
[274] Hartin, *James*, 57.
[275] McKnight, *James*, 74.
[276] Hiebert, "Unifying Theme," 224.
[277] Laws, *James*, 67, Davids, *James*, 37, McKnight, *James*, 65. Tamez sees both economic deprivation and religious persecution being alluded to in James' speaking of trials, suffering, patience and perseverance. See Elsa Tamez, "James: A Circular Letter for Immigrants," *RevExp* 108 (2011): 371.

James cannot be subsumed under the socio-economic rubric.[278] Hence, economic oppressions should not be viewed as the only situation of testing in James' concern.

Besides socio-economic oppressions, being friends of the world is a more serious crisis James sees in the audience. As discussed above, one of the devastating consequences of believers being tempted by desire and accepting the value of the world is community conflict and disorder. This is further supported by the thematic exhortations in 1:19–20: "let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness that God requires."[279] The three imperatives, especially the last two, clearly have community interactions in view.[280] The theme of anger, which is the climax of this series of exhortation, also anticipates the conflict situations in 3:1–4:10.[281] However, this aspect of testing seems to have been overlooked by most commentators.[282] In light of the above survey of community situations in James, one may see more clearly how intra-communal conflicts can be part of the trials James' audience was facing. Indeed, the content of James reveals a community heading to disorder, owing to the wars and fightings that originated from the members' desire for pleasure (4:1–3). Even worse, the leaders of the community were also involved in these conflicts, or even initiating them (3:1–18). One expression of communal conflict was hostile speech among believers, including cursing (3:9–10), slandering (4:11–12), and grumbling against each other (5:9). Furthermore, the attraction of wealth was drawing the community away from its care for the poor (2:1–7), leaving the most needy members of the community neglected (2:15–16), thus polarizing the community. It is even possible

[278] Moo, *James*, 24.
[279] Wall sees this triple exhortation as providing the structure for the remaining part of James. See Wall, *Community of the Wise*, 69. See also Zane C. Hodges, *The Epistle of James: Proven Character Through Testing*, GNTC (Irving, TX: Grace Evangelical Society, 1994), 35–108. Although the structure proposed by Wall seems forced, the three exhortations in 1:19 indeed anticipates much of the themes in the main body of James, so the entire letter can be broadly outlined by it. See William R. Baker, "The Tongue as the Key Indicator of Spirituality: The Epistle of James," Paper delivered to the ETS Annual Meeting (Boston: 1987), 6.
[280] Verseput, "James 1:19–27," 433.
[281] Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 66 claims that theme of anger may be related to the intra-communal strife the author addresses in 4:1–10. Van de Sandt also regards 1:19–21 as providing relevant background for Jas 4:1–6. See van de Sandt, "Law and Ethics," 336.
[282] Except Wachob's observation that "the various trials are always addressed with respect to the overriding concern of 'communal relations.'" See Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, 158. However, Wachob has not analyzed in detail this communal aspect of trial in James besides his study on Jas 2:1–13.

that the rich members of the society were showing arrogance (4:13–17), perhaps also involved in the oppression of the poor (5:1–6). Under these circumstances, hostility among believers will continue to build up, and trust among community members will be jeopardized. Thus disorder and every kind of evil behaviours can be seen among the faith community (3:16). As a result, believers would feel weary about the condition of the group. In view of self-categorization theory, such negative perceptions of the community could weaken the members' identification with the group. This may be part of the reason why James exhorts the audience to endure and be patient (1:12; 5:7–8). Besides enduring oppressions and temptations of desire, the believers also had to be patient with the unsatisfactory condition of the faith community, so that on the one hand they will not be tempted to participate in the sins mentioned in James, but on the other hand they would not be driven to leave the community altogether. Instead, if the addressees stay committed to their faith as a member of the group, they can become the force to re-unite the shattered community (5:13–20).

3.8 Conclusion

The letter of James is far from an unorganized collection of traditional teachings. Certain themes serve to connect the whole letter. Moreover, it is possible to trace some information about the situation of the audience that prompts the author to write this letter, even if it is sent to a broad audience, geographically spread. Among the connecting threads of James suggested by scholars, it is seldom noticed that intra-communal conflict is an important part of the reasons for the writing of James. This investigation has shown that not only some passages in James reflect clearly community conflicts among the audience, but other passages that are usually viewed as general admonitions or concerning outsiders only are indeed not unrelated to the theme of intra-communal conflict. Therefore, the theme of communal conflict could be another thread that connects the different parts of the letter.

Although a detailed portrayal of the audience cannot be reconstructed from the content of James, it can be safely asserted that at least some of the local communities among the audience were being troubled with conflicts and hostility

between some of the members. In Strange's words, "[James'] aim is the survival of communities, which, in the face of various trials from within and without, are in danger of disintegrating."[283] While external oppression and the temptation from the devil are not absent in James, the letter attributes the source of communal tribulation principally to the evil desires of the audience. Striving for worldly gain and pleasure, some believers have become friends of the world. Compromising with the value of the world leads to strife and disorder among the faith community.

The above survey has also shown that social-scientific theories about social identity and community conflict can enlighten the understanding of James' background. Passages in James have been shown to be reflecting group dynamics that fit the descriptions of social-scientific models. In particular, in James one may see revealed a community in which members are competing for limited good, leaders are competing for power and authority, dyadic conflict is escalating into group conflict, angers caused by conflict is expressed inappropriately, dissonance caused by witnessing inconsistent behaviours among group members are jeopardizing community coherence, negative perception of the group is weakening individual members' identification with the community, and polarizing effects of conflict situations are breaking the community into subgroups hostile to each other. These group phenomena observed by sociological studies are helpful for giving insight on the conflict situations of James' audience.

However, James does not stop at reproaching the far-from-ideal situations of the audience. The purpose of James is to call the audience to repent, thus restoring unity and harmony both within lives of individual believers and among the whole community. In order to achieve this purpose, the author has to lead the audience to assess their situation in a new light.[284] To do so, the author tried to use the rhetoric of the letter to change the perception and conception of his audience. It is the aim of the next chapter to analyze how James achieve this purpose with its rhetorical strategies.

[283] Strange, *Moral World*, 182–83.
[284] Thurén, "Risky Rhetoric," 277.

Chapter 4
Group Maintenance Strategies in James

In the above chapter it is argued that James reflects situations of community conflict among its audience. Hence, it is conceivable that one main purpose of James is to respond to such conflicts, in order to maintain harmony and cohesiveness in the Christian community. How the teachings and various rhetorical devices in James serve this purpose will be analyzed in this chapter.

The group maintenance strategies of James can be analyzed through two interrelated aspects, both related to the social identity of the Christian community. The first is to strengthen the ingroup bonding of the audience. This is done by stressing the community's special relation to God, which implies a particular identity of the Christian community. The second aspect is sharpening the group boundaries between the audience and outsiders. Certain teachings in James warn the audience against adopting the values and culture of the larger society, which threatens to blur the community's boundaries and thus weakens the solidarity of the group.

4.1 Ingroup Bonding

Several features in the letter of James contribute to the establishment of a strong social identity for the Christian community. Throughout the whole letter, the audience is reminded of their special relation to God through their faith in Jesus Christ (2:1). This relation forms the basis and shapes the instructions in James for the community. Being called by God to be his covenant people puts the Christians in close relationship with each other, with familial and fraternal language used to describe the bonds. This mutual bonding is also defined by the common goal of the whole community, namely, the completeness that God calls his people to become. The Christian identity, with its goal of perfection, binds the audience with the group norms, articulated in "the perfect law, the law of liberty" (Jas 1:25) as interpreted by Jesus' teaching and exemplified in the prototypical figures in Israel's history. Therefore, as the audience embraces more fully this Christian identity, they would be

more motivated to behave in accordance with the teachings in James, and hence promoting the harmony of the group.

Moreover, James rebukes directly the conflict and strife among its audiences. James depicts these situations not only as a threat to the cohesiveness of the group, but also as a fundamental contradiction to the audience's identity as Christian. Hence, by strengthening the social identity of the Christian community, James also contributes to resolving the "wars and fightings" (Jas 4:1) among group members. By investigating James' rhetorical strategies for social-identity building, one may gain a clearer insight on how this letter might serve the purpose of group maintenance in the early church.

4.1.1 People of God

The identity of James' audience is first and foremost defined in the opening address of the letter. The phrase "to the twelve tribes in the Diaspora" (ταῖς δώδεκα φυλαῖς ταῖς ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ) in Jas 1:1, whether it is interpreted literally or metaphorically, has a connotation to the historical Israel as the chosen people-of-God.[1] James regards the Christian community as people-of-God, and wants his audience to see themselves in this perspective.[2] Such a depiction of the audience serves James' rhetoric in at least two aspects. First, it conveys a special relation between God and the audience. They are the recipients of God's promises.[3] This puts the group in a positive light over against all other competing groups, especially the dominant Greco-Roman society. Hence, such connotation enhances the member's

[1] Hartin, "Ethics," 290–92. Sanders observes that within the context of Jewish thoughts in the first century, the use of the number twelve itself would necessarily imply the promise of restoration of Israel. See E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 98. See also Moo, *James*, 49–50, Matt A. Jackson-McCabe, "A Letter to the Twelve Tribes in the Diaspora: Wisdom and 'Apocalyptic' Eschatology in the Letter of James," *SBLSP* 35 (1996): 510–15, and James M. Darlack, "Pray for Reign: The Eschatological Elijah in James 5:17–18" (PhD dissertation, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 2007), 53–56.

[2] Niebuhr asserts that James, like other Jewish Diaspora letters, seeks to strengthen the people-of-God identity of the audience, which includes both Jewish and Gentile Christians. See Niebuhr, "Der Jakobusbrief," 420–43. However, Coker observes that in James, the ingathering of the Diaspora is transformed from literally ingathering into a place to an ingathering into the empire of God, which is characterized by Jesus' interpretation of the Law. See K. Jason Coker, "Calling on the Diaspora: Nativism and Diaspora Identity in the Letter of James," in *T&T Clark Handbook to Social Identity in the New Testament*, eds. J. Brian Tucker and Coleman A. Baker (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 452.

[3] The fulfillment of God's promises is further expressed in the eschatological themes in James. See below section 4.1.6.

identification with the community. Furthermore, being the people-of-God implies that with the privilege of God's grace, they also bear the responsibilities of God's people. This lays the ground for the exhortations that James is going to give in the letter. Second, a sense of solidarity is innate in the term "the twelve tribes". This phrase invokes the prophets' hope in the Hebrew scripture that looks forward to the reunion of the dispersed people of God.[4] By using this particular expression, the unity of the audience is emphasized, even though they may still be geographically dispersed. Hence, the opening address underlies the emphasis of group cohesiveness in the whole letter.

In 1:18, the identity of believers is further conveyed by the image of God giving birth to them through the word of truth, with the purpose that they may be "a kind of first-fruits of his creation." Such a depiction of the community highlights several aspects of its identity. First, the image of birth indicates that the Christian identity is something new.[5] This new identity is in opposition to their old status in evil desires and sin, which eventually give birth to death (1:15). This newness implies that some change in the audience is envisioned. Hence, having this new identity brings the necessity of denunciation of old patterns of behaviours, which include those community destructing behaviours that James rebukes in the later parts of the letter. Second, first-fruits are thought to be the best part of the harvest, and belong especially to God.[6] Hence, associating the audience with first-fruits emphasizes again their unique status as people-of-God, distinct from and superior to other communities.[7] Thus, the metaphor helps to increase positive feelings of the members towards the community. Third, by portraying the Christian community as first-fruits, James brings in God's whole redemptive plan for the world.[8] The audience is reminded of the promise of salvation they have inherited. Therefore, the

[4] Such a hope is most clearly expressed in Ezek 37:19; 48:1–35. In the NT, references to this hope can be seen in passages like Rom 11:26–29 and Rev 7:4–8. The question about restoring the kingdom of Israel in Acts 1:6 is also likely to be reflecting such a tradition.
[5] Church, "Complete Ethics," 413. In addition, Luther, "Protreptic Ethics," 359 observes that the concept of new creation is concretized by the use of creation metaphors in James.
[6] Davids, *James*, 90. In particular, the metaphor of first-fruits may invoke the Israel tradition of first-fruit offering (Exod 23:19; 34:26). In this case, the phrase would further stress the purity and holiness of the audience as the people-of-God.
[7] Mariam J. Kamell, "The Nature of Eternal Security in James: Divine Grace Pairs with the Imitatio Dei," *TestImp* 2 (2009): 10.
[8] McKnight, *James*, 130–31.

first-fruit metaphor echoes the opening address of the letter in stressing the people-of-God identity of the audience.

Moreover, the audience is continuously reminded of their being the people-of-God throughout the whole letter of James. For example, in 2:19, James affirms their belief that God is one. In 3:9, James refers to their blessing God. In 4:15, James reminds them that they are under God's decree. These sayings highlight the fact that the audience already has a close relation with God. Hence, the believers' cognitive identification with the community is enhanced.

The people-of-God identity is to be explicitly realized in the communal interactions exhorted in 5:13–20. The significance of this passage in James' overall strategies will be discussed in more details below.[9] Suffice here to observe that the passage envisions an egalitarian structure for the community, in which all members are to intercede on behalf of all others.[10] This creates a sense of equality among all the community members. According to Allport's contact model, an equal status in contact situation is essential for successful conflict resolution.[11] Hence the people-of-God identity, together with its expression in community life as exhorted by James, is basic for James' effort to maintain the harmony of the faith community.

4.1.2 The Elected Poor

In Jas 2, another aspect of the audience's identity as the people-of-God is emphasized. By a rhetorical question in 2:5, James stresses that God has chosen "the poor in the world" (τοὺς πτωχοὺς τῷ κόσμῳ) to be the heir of his promised kingdom. It should be noted that the phrase τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν in 2:5 parallels 1:12, which in turn echoes the opening address in 1:1–4.[12] Hence, the "elected poor in the world" recaptures "the twelve tribes in the Diaspora". The condition of being poor is contrasted and relativized by being the chosen heir of God's kingdom.[13] For James,

[9] See below section 4.1.8.
[10] Strange, *Moral World*, 30.
[11] Allport, *Nature of Prejudice*, 281.
[12] Davids, *James*, 79, McKnight, *James*, 109.
[13] Jackson-MaCabe, "Messiah Jesus," 726.

"the poor in the world" provides the self-definition for the people-of-God.[14] While the socio-economical aspect of "the poor" in James is not to be denied, James' use of the term is more than a socio-economic designation. Instead, James is putting forward the poor as the stereotypical members of the community, to which all other members must conform.[15] The prototypical characteristics of the elected poor include their rich faith in God (πλουσίους ἐν πίστει),[16] and their love of God (τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν). Moreover, their meekness is also indicated in the contrast with the oppressing behaviours of the rich (2:6–7). By stressing the poor to be God's elected people, James defines these characteristics of the poor as the basic markers of the community's identity.

From a social-scientific perspective, designating the faith community as the elected poor attributes some kind of central status to the lowly members of the group, who would otherwise be peripheral according to the standard of the larger society.[17] The idea of election can thus become a key factor in maintaining the stability of the group,[18] since such a designation not only helps to increase the attachment of the majority of disadvantaged poor members to the group, but also reshapes the self-perception of all the members. By shifting the understanding of their identity from worldly criteria to God's election, James makes it possible for all the members of the group to identify with one another, even though there would be discrepancies in their worldly situations. According to social identity theories, this increases intragroup attraction, and hence contributes to the cohesiveness of the community.[19] Furthermore, the election by God to be heirs of his kingdom again highlights the superior status of the group, since this inheritance is much more precious than any

[14] Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, 192.
[15] Bauckham, *James*, 193. See also Kloppenborg, "Poverty and Piety," 201–5, Batten, "Ideological Strategies," 21.
[16] The phrase "rich in faith" does not indicate that the poor have more faith. See Johnson, *James*, 224–25. However, it echoes ἔχετε τὴν πίστιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τῆς δόξης in 2:1, and presupposes that the poor do have faith in God and Christ.
[17] Hartin observes that in James, the Law of Love is illustrated especially in the concern for the poor. This greatly increases the centrality of the poor for the community. See Hartin, "Vision, Ethics, and Ethos," 458–59.
[18] Elliott, *Home for Homeless*, 121–22.
[19] Social-scientific theories propose that important aspects of intragroup attraction include similarity, interdependence, stereotypically identical, positive evaluated stereotype. See Hogg and Abrams, *Social Identifications*, 107.

benefits that early kingdoms could offer. It changes the values assigned to attributes of the faith community and of the wider society, and hence transforms the negative experience of being poor and oppressed into a positive value.[20] Such restoration of positive distinctiveness is essential for a group that is struggling for its place among its surrounding social environment.[21] Therefore, by emphasizing the faith community's identity as the elected poor, James contributes to resolve both the tensions of intramural division and negative experiences from extramural relations.

4.1.3 Christology and Social Identity

Although Jesus Christ is only explicitly mentioned twice in James (1:1; 2:1), the importance of Christology to the self-understanding of James' audience should not be downplayed. In the opening address, the designation of the audience as God's people (the twelve tribes) is coupled with the author's self-designation as a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ (θεοῦ καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δοῦλος). This highlights the centrality of Christ for the audience's identity as God's people.[22] The stress placed upon the audience's faith in Jesus Christ (ἔχετε τὴν πίστιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) in 2:1 further emphasizes the importance of the audience's belief in Christ for their self-understanding. The audience's faith in Christ underlies not only the admonition in Jas 2, but also all the subsequent teachings in James. Hence, Christology also forms the basis of James' instructions of the believers' behaviour.

Besides these two explicit mentions of Christ, the importance of Christology in James can be seen in James' frequent allusion to Jesus' teachings. Although James never attributes these teachings to Jesus, the audience would presumably be able to recognize those sayings as from Jesus.[23] These allusions to Jesus' teaching form a memory genre for the faith community, shaping and maintaining its identity by continuously evoking the social memory of the group's historical root in Jesus Christ

[20] Tajfel and Turner, "Social Identity Theory," 19.
[21] Elliott, *Home for Homeless*, 103.
[22] Sloan, "Christology," 22.
[23] Kloppenborg discussed some attempts to explain James' lack of attribution of Jesus' saying, and he proposes that James is applying the convention of *aemulatio* to enhance his rhetorical force. This would imply that James regards the audience to be able to recognize the Jesus tradition behind James' paraphrase. See Kloppenborg, "Emulation," 125–33.

and appropriating it for the community's present situation.[24] Therefore, Christ is significant for the community not only as the agent through which believers acquire the identity of people-of-God, but also as the core around which the identity of the community is reinforced.

Another indication of the significance of Christ to the social identity of the audience may be found in the phrase "the good name that is called upon you" (τὸ καλὸν ὄνομα τὸ ἐπικληθὲν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς) in 2:7, which probably refers to Jesus Christ.[25] The suggestion that the phrase refers to the believers' being baptized in the name of Jesus[26] is unclear from the context.[27] More certain is that it expresses a sense of ownership, a special relation between Christ and the believers.[28] Moreover, it should be noted that within 2:5–7, the name of Christ is associated with the community's experience of being oppressed by the rich. Therefore, as the community members claim their faith in Christ (2:1), they are also identifying themselves with the elected poor, an identity that transcends but has implications for their social-economic status.

In summary, Christology is central to James' establishing and reinforcing the social identity of the audience. Christ is the foundation of the community's identity as the people-of-God and the elected poor. Christ's authoritative teaching also defines and enforces the community's group norm. Hence, in case when there are deviations from the standard of the group, Christ's authority can help to settle the dissonances and the conflicts caused. Therefore, though not theologically elaborated, Christology is indeed essential to James' group maintenance strategies.

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[24] Olick, "Genre Memories," 383–84.

[25] There is a debate whether this "name" refers to God or to Christ. However, in view of a correspondence with the phrase "the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ" (τὴν πίστιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) in 2:1, which begins this section (2:1–7), it is likely that the name in 2:7 refers to Christ. So Dibelius, *James*, 141, Davids, *James*, 113, Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, 89.

[26] See for example Davids, *James*, 113–14, Martin, *James*, 67, McKnight, *James*, 201–2, Franz Mussner, "Die Tauflehre des Jakobusbriefs," in *Zeichen des Glaubens: Studien zu Taufe und Firmung*, eds. Hansjörg auf der Maur and Bruno Kleinheyer (Freiburg: Herder, 1972), 62, Sloan, "Christology," 22, Baker, "Christology," 74. Braumann further suggests that other passages in James that refer to baptism include 1:18; 2:5,14; 4:10,12; 5:15,20. See Georg Braumann, "Der theologische Hintergrund des Jakobusbriefes," *TZ* 18 (1962): 406–8. However, most of these references are uncertain and vague.

[27] So Moo, *James*, 109, Hans F. von Campenhausen, "Taufen im dem Namen Jesu?" *VC* 25 (1971): 3, Alistair Stewart-Sykes, "'Αποκύησις λόγῳ ἀληθείας: Paraenesis and Baptism in Matthew, James, and the Didache," in *Matthew, James, and Didache*, eds. Huub van de Sandt and Jürgen K. Zangenberg, (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 349–52.

[28] Johnson, *James*, 226.

4.1.4 The Call to Perfection

Perfection is a key notion in James that connects the various themes in the letter. A detailed discussion on the concept of perfection in James cannot be given here.[29] However, it would be pertinent to highlight some aspects on how the notion of perfection is relevant to group maintenance in James.

The call to perfection is posed at the beginning of the letter, expressed forcefully through several expressions: ἔργον τέλειον ἐχέτω, ἦτε τέλειοι καὶ ὁλόκληροι, ἐν μηδενὶ λειπόμενοι (Jas 1:4). This call to perfection is a corollary of the community's being "the twelve tribes" (1:1) of God. It provides a shared vision and ethos for every individual member as well as for the community as a whole.[30] It also serves as a unifying factor for the group by providing a common goal.[31] Moreover, perfection defines the community's true destiny, which depends on God's initial formative action (1:17–18).[32] Since perfection is a gift from God, all the believers stand in equal status before this call.

However, the audience of James is not to passively await a gift that is to be bestowed in the future.[33] Rather, perfection is also presented in James as an attainable goal, which is expressed primarily as total allegiance to God.[34] The goal of perfection finds expression in and motivates believers' moral actions in accordance to God's will, which is referred to in James as the perfect law (1:25).[35] In particular, in Jas 2 the love of neighbour is to be especially expressed in the caring for the poor. Hence

[29] For a detailed discussion, see Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 177–94.
[30] Hartin, "Ethics," 304.
[31] Studies on conflicts have asserted that the existence of superordinate goals can lead to de-escalation of conflict. See Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 182–84.
[32] Wilson, "Sin as Sex," 167.
[33] Hartin, *Spirituality of Perfection*, 52–53. Huub Welzen, "The Way of Perfection: Spirituality in the Letter of James," *SS* 13 (2003): 91 also asserts that perfection in James is a qualitative description of the followers of the Christian way of life, as well as the end result of this life.
[34] Batten, *Friendship and Benefaction*, 106–7. Konradt claims that the statement in 3:2 that everyone stumbles, especially in the sins of tongue, indicates that James considers no one can really attain the goal of perfection. See Matthias Konradt, "The Love Command in Matthew, James, and the Didache," in *Matthew, James, and Didache*, , eds. Huub van de Sandt and Jürgen K. Zangenberg, (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 286. However, this need not be the case, since perfection in James is understood primarily as undivided devotion to God instead of the absence of any error. Moreover, it is likely that James is appealing to commonplace statements in 3:2. See McKnight, *James*, 272–73.
[35] Hartin, *Spirituality of Perfection*, 58–60. Such concept of perfection is rooted in Jewish traditions, but also finds correspondence in Greek philosophies. See for example Nicholas Denyer, "Mirrors in James 1:22–25 and Plato, *Alcibiades* 132C–133C," *TynBul* 50 (1999): 237–40.

perfection is also linked with the community's identity as God's elected poor.[36] This would have direct consequence for the stability of the group, since only the group that is willing to support its members under difficult conditions can maintain the loyalty and trust of its adherents.[37] Therefore, by connecting the notion of perfection to the actions of caring for the poor, James contributes to the solidarity of the group.

Another example of the notion of perfection contributing to reinforcement of community bonding can be found in 3:13–18. Although perfection is not directly mentioned, the theme of wisdom in the pericope is closely related to the call to perfection in James. In particular, after the initial statement of the goal of perfection in 1:4, James immediately address the issue of lack of wisdom (εἰ δέ τις ὑμῶν λείπεται σοφίας).[38] Wisdom is thus understood as an inseparable aspect of perfection. In 3:13–18, the theme of wisdom is addressed in the context of community strife, especially the competition among teachers.[39] Hence, James casts the conflict among the audience in contrast to their call to perfection. The strife in the community is represented as in direct contradiction to the audience's identity as God's people who are called to be perfect. James then set a prototype for the group in his description of the true wisdom in 3:17–18. The seven properties of true wisdom in 3:17 are all related to community building, indicating James' intention to alternate the situation of the community.[40] According to James, a prototypical member of the group, that is, one that has true wisdom should be "a binding force in the Christian community," those who make peace (3:18).[41] By connecting making peace with wisdom, which constitutes a core aspect of the identity of the community, James could shift the self-perception of the conflicting members from competitors back to their core identity as people-of-God. In fact, they are all "made in the likeness of God" (3:9). This change

[36] Hartin, "Ethics," 306–7.
[37] David A. DeSilva, *The Letter to the Hebrews: In Social-Scientific Perspective*, CC 15 (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2012), 147–48.
[38] Johnson observes that 1:2–8 is joined by a tight logic that presents an argument. In particular, 1:5a introduces an exception to the perception in 1:2–4. See Johnson, *James*, 182.
[39] See above section 3.4.2.
[40] Margaret P. Aymer, *First Pure, Then Peaceable*, LNTS 379 (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 30–52.
[41] Davids, *James*, 154–55.

of perception of identity and images of the rivals is essential for reconciliation.[42] Thus, 3:13–18 utilizes the notion of perfection for restoring harmony in the community.

Nonetheless, the audience of James is far from perfect. This is obvious from the letter's harsh rebukes towards behaviours of believers. The negative experiences of the community may cast believers in doubt (1:6). Strife in the community can cause disorder (3:16). Moreover, the dissonance arising from the discrepancy between belief and experience can jeopardize members' adherence to the group. Hence James keeps stressing the goal of perfection throughout the whole letter and gives corrective admonitions that attempts to bring the audience back to perfection, so that harmony can be restored in the community. Furthermore, James stresses the importance of endurance (1:3–4, 12; 5:7–11).[43] On the one hand, endurance is the means for believers to receive the gift of perfection from God. On the other hand, endurance itself is an aspect of the believers' conformity to the command of God, hence an expression of perfection.[44] Thus, by encouraging the audience to endure, the plausibility of the call to perfection is maintained despite the present imperfect conditions. The certainty of the Lord's return and judgment can help them focus on the future fulfillment of the promises of God instead of the present imperfection.[45] This helps to reduce the dissonance caused by the discrepancy between the ideal of perfection and the present situation of the community and hence helps to strengthen the stability of the group.

4.1.5 Inculcation of Group Norms

Internal order and discipline are essential to the stability of any community. They are necessary for a group to resist external pressures and to maintain internal

[42] Marilynn B. Brewer, "Identity and Conflict," in *Intergroup Conflicts and Their Resolution: A Social Psychological Perspective*, ed. Daniel Bar-Tal (New York: Psychology Press, 2011), 136–38, Bar-Siman-Tov, *Conflict Resolution*, 119.

[43] In James, endurance includes the passive sense of heroically accepting difficult situations as well as the active sense of embracing their sufferings in the hope of the coming Lord. See Hartin, "Vision, Ethics, and Ethos," 461–62.

[44] This latter aspect is most obviously seen in 1:12, since those who endure temptation is blessed and will receive the crown of life.

[45] Mark E. Gaskins, "Looking at the Future: James 4:13–5:11," *RevExp* 97 (2000): 238.

solidarity and cohesion.[46] That is why clearly defined group norms are important for group maintenance. When the group faces challenges, group norms could serve the function of bringing order and predictability to the environment and thus help to maintain group identity.[47] One sees in James great efforts to inculcate group norms to the audience through the admonitions contained in the letter. James articulates the group norms of the faith community mainly by its ethical teachings. These exhortations aim at establishing important principles and values, such as truth, mercy, justice and peace. Such transformation in social and moral orientations is an essential foundation for reconciliation.[48] Hence, the ethical instructions in James play an important role for restoring harmony among the audience.

In James, observing the law is a vital means for the believers to express their belonging to the faith community.[49] In particular, James appeals to legislations in the Torah to authorize his teaching.[50] Not only is Lev 19:18 directly quoted in Jas 2:8, Johnson observes that James makes use of Lev 19:12–18 as one of the guiding passages of his own teaching.[51] The emphasis on the law resonates with James' designating the audience as the twelve tribes, the people-of-God. The connection between these two notions is also expressed in the term "the royal law" (2:8). This term stresses that the law is of God's kingdom, which the faith community is going to inherit from God (1:12; 2:5).[52] It also reminds the audience of their responsibility as the people-of-God, that is, to offer clean and acceptable worship to God. This responsibility underlies the concern for dissension and division in the community,

[46] Elliott, *Home for Homeless*, 111.
[47] Esler, "Outline," 32.
[48] Nadim N. Rouhana, "Key Issues in Reconciliation: Challenging Traditional Assumptions on Conflict Resolution and Power Dynamics," in *Intergroup Conflicts and Their Resolution*, ed. Daniel Bar-Tal (New York: Psychology Press, 2011), 298–300.
[49] Hartin, *Spirituality of Perfection*, 79.
[50] What the "Law of freedom" in James refers to is debated. Jackson-McCabe argues for a Hellenistic sense of the term, referring to a free life in accordance with reason. See Matt A. Jackson-McCabe, *Logos and Law in the Letter of James*, NovTSup 100 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 135–92. But mostly the term is regarded as referring to the Mosaic Law or the Torah as interpreted by Jesus. So Johnson, *James*, 209, Hartin, *James*, 111–15, Davids, *James*, 99–100, Moo, *James*, 93–94, McKnight, *James*, 155–58. Niehoff further qualify the term as referring to the limited sense of those part of the Decalogue which pertain to ethical issues, in response to the Pauline understanding of the Law. See Niehoff, "Implied Audience," 70–71.
[51] Luke T. Johnson, "The Use of Leviticus 19 in the Letter of James," *JBL* 101 (1982): 391–401.
[52] Davids, *James*, 114, Moo, *James*, 112. Mariam J. Kamell, "The Soteriology of James in Light of Earlier Jewish Wisdom Literature and the Gospel of Matthew" (PhD dissertation, University of St. Andrews, 2010), 158.

which renders the community unclean and the worship unacceptable.[53] Furthermore, the law is also closely connected with perfection in James, as indicated by the term "the perfect law" (1:25) and the exhortation to "fulfill the law" (2:8). As the people-of-God, believers are requested to take God's point of view, which would lead to "a radically different assessment of social relationships."[54] By making such connections between the group norm and the identity and goal of the group, James renders it necessary for the audience to take heed of his teachings as they accept their identity as people-of-God.

It should be noted that James does not provide many detailed guidelines for the practice of the law in concrete situations. The letter does not present the law in a "legalistic" way, but regards it as the fulfillment of God's promise to his people.[55] In line with the Jewish traditions, James presumes a close relationship between the law and wisdom.[56] James does not only intend to regulate the external behaviours of the believers, but more importantly he attempts to reorient them into "a new and different meaning system grounded on the faith of Jesus Christ the Lord of Glory."[57] Hence, James considers the unacceptable behaviours of the audience not only as transgression of social order, but primarily as sin (1:15; 2:9; 4:17; 5:20). Transgression of these norms does not only disturb community order, but directly contradicts the group's self-understanding as people-of-God.

From a social identity perspective, the ethical teachings in James are not only instructions on right relationship with God and others, but also function in other ways to maintain the cohesiveness of the community. By encouraging the audience to follow the group norms articulated in James' instructions, James provides a means for community members to show their fidelity to the group, hence strengthening their

[53] The emphasis on righteous behaviours as essential to true worship of God is consistent with Scriptural and Jewish traditions. See Verseput, "James 1:19–27," 437–39.
[54] Welzen, "Way of Perfection," 94.
[55] Mariam J. Kamell, "Incarnating Jeremiah's promised new covenant in the 'Law' of James," *EQ* 83.1 (2011): 19–28.
[56] For a detailed survey of the tradition between Torah and Wisdom, see Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Law and Wisdom from Ben Sira to Paul: A Tradition Historical Enquiry into the Relation of Law, Wisdom, and Ethics*, WUNT 2/16 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985).
[57] Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 274. Niebuhr compares this orientation towards the Law in contradistinction to the *halakhic* interpretation of the Torah typical for rabbinic traditions. See Niebuhr, "Ethics and Anthropology," 234–36, 240–41.

sense of belonging.[58] Conversely, according to self-categorization theory, as members identify more with the identity of the group, they are more motivated to conform to group norms.[59] Therefore James' continuous emphasis of the audience's identity as God's people helps to promote conformity to the letter's teachings, and thus leading the audience to involve in the actions that strengthen community bonding, such as caring for the poor and avoiding hostile speeches.

Kanter observes that commitment to a group includes an aspect of moral commitment, which refers to the commitment to "uphold norms, obey the authority of the group and support its values."[60] The building of moral commitment involves the processes of transcendence and mortification, which mean the processes of submission of personal control and surrendering to something beyond oneself.[61] These observations highlight the importance of James' stress on meekness (1:21; 3:13), submission to God (4:7), and humbling (4:10) for group maintenance. In addition to improving personal morality, these exhortations enhance social identification for James' audience.

Therefore, the ethical and community instructions in James contribute to maintaining the solidarity of the group not only by directly commanding pro-social behaviours, but also by evoking the identity of the faith community and by promoting commitment to the group. Transgressors are called to repent, which not only means changes in behaviours, but also reassessing the group's identity as "a community that offers acceptable worship to God."[62] The group norms stressed in James are supposed to form part of the belief of the audience and hence is closely connected to the people-of-God identity of the community.

4.1.6 Eschatology

Eschatological expectations form a crucial part of the worldview for many early Christians. This is also the case for the letter of James. The language of testing,

[58] Steinel et. al., "Intragroup Dynamics," 781–82.
[59] Turner et. al., *Rediscovering the Social Group*, 56–66.
[60] Rosabeth M. Kanter, *Commitment and Community* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972), 69.
[61] Kanter, *Commitment*, 73–74.
[62] Wilson, "James 4:7–10," 374.

suffering and perfection in the letter "is part of the vocabulary of first-century eschatology and reflects traditional Judaeo-Christian beliefs about the purposes of God which will be brought to their fulfillment in an imminent end-time."[63] The eschatological themes in James are most prominent in the beginning and ending sections of the epistle. Hence, eschatology frames the instructions in James, setting the ethical teachings within an eschatological horizon.[64] Eschatological expectations serve to legitimize the social situation of James' audience, and to motivate them to follow the exhortations in the letter.

At the centre of James' eschatological expectations is the judgment of God which will be manifested at the end-time. The theme of judgment is especially intensive in Jas 4–5. The certainty of the Lord's return and judgment makes it necessary to reinterpret the present situation. In particular, it helps believers to look at the trials and suffering in their present experiences from a different perspective, so that they can make sense of them and remain steadfast in all these negative experiences. On the other hand, the judgment of God also becomes a threat for those refusing to follow the decree of God. Hence, the idea that the Lord is near (5:9) is both a comfort and a warning.[65] It intensifies the faith community's sense of their identity as the people-of-God, and hence reinforces the community's boundaries with the dominant society and enhances equality of status within the community.

The ethical teachings in James are closely connected with the judgment of God.[66] In the terminology of Berger and Luckmann, the eschatological expectation of the judgment of God forms an essential part of the faith community's "symbolic universe."[67] By emphasizing the judgment of God, James attempts to shape the community by providing an authoritative perception of reality.[68] The value and

[63] Isaacs, "Suffering," 185.
[64] Penner, *James and Eschatology*, 121–213. See also Lockett, "Spectrum," 131–48.
[65] Kamell, "Eternal Security," 6.
[66] For a discussion of the expression of the eschatological reality of judgment in James, see Martin Klein, *"Ein vollkommenes Werk": Vollkommenheit, Gesetz und Gericht als theologische Themen des Jakobusbriefes*, BWANT 139 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1995), 163–84.
[67] Berger and Luckmann, *Social Construction*, 110–46.
[68] On the significance of eschatological belief for the perception of reality, see John G. Gager, *Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1975), 19–49.

significance of the community's experiences are not to be evaluated by present gains and losses, but must be considered primarily in view of the final judgment of God. Hence, this eschatological expectation of judgment in James "serves to explain and redefine experienced reality and the moral obligations of those who live in that reality."[69] The judgment of God thus provides for believers the ultimate reason to conform to the norms of the faith community. For groups that hold derivate values and practices from the dominant society, such as the early Jesus movement, such legitimating of the social reality is essential for maintaining group stability, especially when the group experiences hardship in the world.[70] By appealing to God's judgment, James protects the audience from the attraction of the dominant society, so that they will remain attached to the community.

Furthermore, eschatological expectations, including the rewards and punishments of God, provide an alternate framework for believers to assess the cost and reward of their behaviours. According to studies in conflict theories, it is observed that when society members realize that the losses resulting from the continuation of the conflict exceed significantly the losses resulting from compromise, they would be motivated to end the conflict.[71] By contrasting God's eschatological rewards and punishments with the audience's present gain and loss in their strife, the motivation for continuing the conflict could be significantly reduced.

4.1.7 Use of Exemplars

One important way for James to reinforce group norms is through the use of prototypical exemplars. According to social identity theories, the internal need of individuals to identify allows group prototypes to shape the behaviour of group members.[72] One important way that group prototypes are formed is through

[69] Patrick A. Tiller, "The Rich and Poor in James: An Apocalyptic Proclamation," *SBLSP* 37 (1998): 920.
[70] Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1967), 29–30.
[71] Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An analysis of Decision under Risk," *Econometrica* 47 (1979): 263–292.
[72] Michael A. Hogg, and Scott A. Reid, "Social Identity, Self-Categorization, and the Communication of Group Norms," *ComThe* 16 (2006): 12–13, M.A. Hogg et. al., "Why Do People Join Groups? Three Motivational Accounts from Social Psychology," *SPPC* 2 (2008): 1273–74.

experiences of exemplars that embody the group categories.[73] Roller observes that essential elements of exemplarity include an action that embody social values, an audience that observes and evaluates the action, the commemoration of the group, and the drive to imitate the exemplary action.[74] Several exemplars are brought forward in James to serve the purpose of reinforcing group solidarity.

The first and most important exemplar in James is God. In James, God is the foundation of authentic human existence and norms for human behaviours.[75] In 1:5–8, God's giving generously (ἁπλῶς) is put in contrast with the dividedness (δίψυχος) of some of the audience.[76] The exhortation to ask God in faith without doubting (αἰτείτω δὲ ἐν πίστει μηδὲν διακρινόμενος) implies that the audience is to imitate God's singleness (ἁπλῶς). Similar ideas are also expressed in 1:16–18, where God, the giver of every perfect gift with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change, is contrasted with the audience's inconsistence and deception (πλανᾶσθε).[77] The way the audience is to imitate God's generosity is explicitly spelt out in 1:27, where believers are exhorted to care for orphans and widows in their afflictions.[78] This principle is also implicitly summarized in 2:13, where the audience's merciful deeds are in direct correspondence with God's mercy.[79] Furthermore, in 3:9–12 believers' inconsistence in using of the tongue is contrasted with examples from the nature, which is God's creation and reflects God's temperament. Hence, while James rebukes the audience's double-tongue, he is also exhorting the believers to imitate God's single-mindedness.

[73] For more discussion on the role of prototype and exemplar on group processes, see J. David Smith, "Prototypes, Exemplars, and the Natural History of Categorization," *PBR* 21 (2014): 312–31.
[74] Matthew B. Roller, "Exemplarity in Roman Culture: The Cases of Horatius Cocles and Cloelia," *CP* 99 (2004): 4–5.
[75] Frankemölle, *Jakobus*, 1:305–20, Wilson, "James 4:7–10," 376.
[76] Cheung observes that ἁπλῶς belongs to the language of perfection in James, while doubleness is the major obstacle to perfection. See Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 181–84, 196.
[77] The expression of dividedness in inconsistence and deception is also an important theme in other parts of James. See Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 205–6.
[78] Kamell, "Eternal Security," 11.
[79] Felder, "Partiality," 69. See also Kamell, "Eternal Security," 18–22.

Jesus might also be regarded as an exemplar in James, even though his deeds are not mentioned.[80] James' admonitions rely heavily on Jesus' sayings, which is inseparable from the life and deeds of Jesus that enacts these sayings. For example, Sloan observes that the rebuke of partiality against the poor "seems to assume the historically based gospel traditions regarding the fellowship of Christ with sinners."[81] When James reminds the audience of the teaching of Jesus, he is also implicitly requiring them to follow the example of Christ.

Besides God and Christ, who are the supreme exemplars for the community, James also invokes several other exemplars from Israel's history. These historical figures embody God's decrees for his people, and hence help to define the prototype for the community.[82] The first historical figure James appeals to is Abraham.[83] The presentation of Abraham as "our father" (2:21) emphasizes his importance as a prototypical figure for the community. Indeed, Abraham is "an obvious exemplary choice for any community with a Jewish heritage," and has the power to draw all the members of the audience together.[84] Through invoking the offering of Isaac as a deed of Abraham that works together with and perfects his faith (2:22), James highlights

[80] Robert J. Foster, *The Significance of Exemplars for the Interpretation of the Letter of James*, WUNT 2/376 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 202.
[81] Sloan, "Christology," 17.
[82] Robbins asserts that in prophetic discourses, which form part of James' rhetoric, the story of God's people begins to become God's word and serves to supply the rules for the audience. See Vernon K. Robbins, "Argumentative Textures in Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation," in *Rhetorical Argumentation in Biblical Texts*, eds. Anders Eriksson et. al. (Harrisburg: Trinity, 2002), 47 and Wachob, "Household and Kingdom," 166–68. Therefore the exemplars in James do not only illustrate the letter's argument, but also define the norm for the community.
[83] The use of the example of Abraham in James has been regarded by many as in polemic with Paul, especially Rom 4. See for example F. Avemarie, "Die Werke des Gesetzes im Spiegel des Jakobusbriefes," *ZTK* 98 (2001): 282–309, Andreas Lindemann, *Paulus im ältesten Christentum: das Bild des Apostels und die Rezeption der paulinischen Theologie in der frühchristlichen Literatur bis Marcion*, BHT 58 (Tübingen : Mohr, 1979), 240–52, Gerd Lüdemann, *Opposition to Paul in Jewish Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 140–49, Hengel, "Der Jakobusbrief," 248–78 and Niehoff, "Implied Audience," 61–69. For alternative views on this issue, see Penner, *James and Eschatology*, 47–74, Ruzer, "James on Faith," 96–103, Robert V. Rakestraw, "James 2:14–26: Does James Contradict the Pauline Soteriology?" *CTR* 4.1 (1986): 31–50, Wiard Popkes, "Two Interpretations of 'Justification' in the New Testament: Reflections on Galatians 2:15–21 and James 2:21–25," *ST* 59 (2005): 129–46, Joachim Jeremias, "Paul and James," *ExpT* 66 (1954–55): 368–71, C. Ryan Jenkins, "Faith and Works in Paul and James," *BSac* 159 (2002): 62–78, David R. Maxwell, "Justified by Works and Not by Faith Alone: Reconciling Paul and James," *Concordia Journal* 33 (2007): 375–78, and Margaret M. Mitchell, "The Letter of James as a Document of Paulinism?" in *Reading James with New Eyes*, eds. Robert L. Webb and John S. Kloppenborg, (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 75–98. The relation between James and Paul will not be treated in detail here. This study will focus on the significance of the example of Abraham for the purpose of group maintenance in James.
[84] Foster, *Significance of Exemplars*, 91.

obedience to God's command as core to the community's identity.[85] Moreover, Abraham's relation to God is also presented as exemplary for the community.[86] As James stresses that Abraham is God's friend (2:23), the faith community is also supposed to be God's friend instead of friends of the world (4:4).

Coupled with the example of Abraham is the example of Rahab (2:25). Kamell observes that these two exemplers who are "as far apart from each other on the social scale as is possible" may be intentional to stress that James' exhortations apply to every person.[87] While James cites Rahab mainly as another example to prove the inseparability of faith and work,[88] the correspondence between her action of hospitality and the theme of mercy in 2:12–13 should not be missed.[89] By the example of Rahab, James not only exhorts the audience to show their faith through works, but also highlights the importance of hospitality towards those in need as an essential expression of the community as God's elected poor.

In 5:10–11, the prophets and Job are used as examples of those enduring in sufferings. Although James has not cited concrete incidences of endurance of the prophets, such stories would be familiar to his audience.[90] James also seems to be relying on Jewish traditions when he uses the example of Job, since Job's patience is not a prominent theme in the OT book of Job.[91] These traditional examples illustrate

[85] Ibid., 93. Foster notes that biblical and subsequent Early Jewish traditions have already increasingly came to view Abraham as the epitome of obedience to God. Chaffin, "Theme of Wisdom," 26 correctly claims that the example of Abraham in James stresses his heeding to what he was told. On the contrary, the suggestion that James is appealing to the tradition of Abraham's hospitality finds little support in the text of James, though the coupling of the examples of Abraham and Rahab gives support to such a suggestion. See Wall, *Community of the Wise*, 142–43, and Ward, "Works of Abraham," 285–90.

[86] Batten, *Friendship and Benefaction*, 143.

[87] Kamell, "Soteriology of James," 177.

[88] Cargal suggests that Rahab may be depicted in James as an example of one who acts on her faith to save herself and others, and hence a model of the true faith and perfection described in James. See Timothy B. Cargal, "When Is a Prostitute Not an Adulteress? The Language of Sexual Infidelity in the Rhetoric of the Letter of James," in *A Feminist Companion to the Catholic Epistles and Hebrews*, ed. Amy-Jill Levine, FCNT 8 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 118–21.

[89] Contra McKnight, *James*, 256–57, where McKnight claims that the hospitality of Rahab is not James' point.

[90] Davids, *James*, 186.

[91] In particular, Gray observes the parallels between James' presentation of Job and that in the *Testament of Job*, although he claims that there is not enough evidence to show literary dependence. See Gray, "Points and Lines," 406–24. See also Donald H. Gard, "The Concept of Job's Character according to the Greek Translator of the Hebrew Text," *JBL* 72 (1953): 182–86, Christopher R. Seitz,

not only the importance of endurance and the certainty of God's reward for those who endure, but also highlight endurance as a prototypical characteristic of God's people.[92] It should also be noted that God's compassionate and merciful nature, which is prototypical for the community as mentioned above, is given as the ground for endurance. This provides yet another link between the identity of the community as people-of-God and the exhortation of endurance. Furthermore, the example of Job may be invoked as the opposite of the wicked rich in James.[93] The example of this rich yet righteous person presses the rich members of James' audience to follow, and hence the rifts between the rich and the poor among the community can be resolved.

Lastly, in 5:17–18, James invokes Elijah, who is "a man with a nature like ours" (ἄνθρωπος ἦν ὁμοιοπαθὴς ἡμῖν), as an exemplar of praying. The emphasis on Elijah's human nature like every believer implies that the audience of James could and should identify with the prototype exemplified by Elijah.[94] This serves James' purpose of group maintenance by reminding the audience's privilege as God's people, hence highlighting the positive distinctiveness of the faith community, especially since Elijah has very high status in Jewish traditions.[95] Moreover, the same human nature of Elijah conveys a sense of equality among all the members of the community. According to Allport's model, this would help to resolve the possible conflict and competitions within the group, since equality of status is an essential factor for conflict resolution.[96]

From the above discussions, it can be seen that the exemplary figures in James all serves to consolidate the audience's people-of-God identity and to connote

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"The Patience of Job in the Epistle of James," in *Konsequente Traditionsgeschichte*, eds. R. Bartelmus et. al. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), 373–82, and Foster, *Significance of Exemplars*, 156–58.

[92] Luther, "Protreptic Ethics," 342–43 observes that the example of Job confirms and corroborates the promise in Jas 1:12. Hence Job receiving rewards from God is prototypical to the people-of-God community.

[93] Foster, *Significance of Exemplars*, 160–61.

[94] Luther, "Protreptic Ethics," 340–41. Darlack, "Pray for Reign," 60 remarks that James' emphasis on Elijah's human nature "was meant to counter Sirach's glowing description of the prophet in order to make Elijah an acesible exemplar for his readers."

[95] Darlack, "Pray for Reign," 56–60 observes that according to Jewish traditions, Elijah is associated with Israel's hope of restoration by God. This eschatological aspect would further enhance members' attachment to the community.

[96] Allport, *Nature of Prejudice*, 281.

the norms of this group.[97] By identifying with these figures, the community members gain a sense of solidarity and are motivated to conform to the group norms. Moreover, since these are highly evaluated figures in the traditions of the faith community, the examples help to strengthen the social identity on the evaluative level. These historical exemplary figures also point the audience to the example of God, who is the supreme prototypical exemplar of the community. This gives further authority to James' exhortations.

4.1.8 Community Assembly

The solidarity of the faith community is to be concretely realized in community assemblies (5:13–20). These last instructions in James are not disconnected from other instructions in the letter, but rather provide a concrete context for the community to practice the ethical teaching, especially the exhortation to show compassion and mercy.[98] The concern for community solidarity is obvious in the pericope, not least indicated by the fact that the phrase ἐν ὑμῖν occurs thrice in this passage (5:13, 14, 19) out of a total of five times in James.

Several features of James' instructions on the community assembly should be noted here. First, the unity of the group is stressed. In 5:13–14, James lists different experiences of the believers, including suffering hardship (κακοπαθέω), cheerful (εὐθυμέω), and being weak (ἀσθενέω). James is not only stating the appropriate reactions for believers in these situations, but more importantly, he is calling community members "to be aware of the similar situations of one another," and thus to "discover their unity and identity with the other members of the community."[99] The exhortations for community life "bind sisters and brothers into one family, sharing the burdens of the suffering, the joy of the cheerful, the responsibility to care for the sick, and also the responsibility of mutual accountability."[100] Mutual relation between community members is emphasized. This helps to make the social identity of the group members more salient over their individual identity, and hence promotes group cohesiveness.

[97] Luther, "Protreptic Ethics," 341–42, 362.
[98] Strange, *Moral World*, 21–41.
[99] Hartin, *Spirituality of Perfection*, 103.
[100] Church, "Complete Ethics," 413.

Second, sick members are given particular attention in the passage.[101] In a culture where personality is perceived primarily as group-oriented,[102] the weakness of an individual could endanger the solidarity of the whole community, since the sick member would easily be marginalized. Hence, the community's care for the sick person is important to restore the unity of the group. Moreover, the promise that "the Lord will raise him up" (5:15), besides conveying a hope for physical healing, also bears an eschatological aspect of salvation.[103] Hence, James' promise in 5:15 not only serves to console the sick person, but also reminds other members of the group of the promise of salvation. Such intention of James is more directly expressed in 5:16, where praying for the sick is generalized into praying for each other in the assembly so that the whole community may be healed (ὅπως ἰαθῆτε). This also helps to increase the sense of solidarity by invoking the same destiny of the whole community. Furthermore, recent social-scientific researches have revealed that the action of prayer has an effect of reducing anger and thus promoting forgiveness.[104] This further enhances harmony within the community. It may also be noted that the mention of faith (πίστις) and the Lord (κύριος) in 5:15 recalls 2:1, which is the basis of the community's identity and the letter's ethical admonitions. Thus the exhortation for the actions of the elders for the sick person is not only a practical instruction, but also contributes to strengthen the social identity of group members.

Third, sin (ἁμαρτία) is also mentioned three times in the passage (5:15, 16, 20). Here, James' instructions for the assembly provide remedies for the sin for

[101] Most commentators regard ἀσθενέω as referring to physical illness in Jas 5:14. However, it is also suggested that the verb refers to spiritual weakness here. See for example Keith Warrington, "James 5:14–18: Healing Then and Now," *IRM* 93 (2004): 347–51, Max Meinertz, "Die Krankensalbung Jak. 5.14f," *BZ* 20 (1932): 23–36, Carl E. Armerding, "'Is Any among You Afflicted': A Study of James 5:13–20," *BSac* 95 (1938): 197, Daniel R. Hayden, "Calling the Elders to Pray," *BSac* 138 (1981): 260, Andrew M. Bowden, "Sincerely James: Reconsidering Frederick Francis's Proposed Health Wish Formula," *JSNT* 38 (2015): 241–57, Dennis R. Edwards, "Reviving Faith: An Eschatological Understanding of James 5:13–20" (PhD dissertation, The Catholic University of America, 2003), 107–15. It should nonetheless be noted that sickness in the ancient worldview was usually regarded as more than merely physical illness. Hence the physical and spiritual senses of weakness are not mutually exclusive.

[102] For the group-oriented personality in the first-century, see Malina, "First-Century Personality," 58–80.

[103] Johnson, *James*, 333.

[104] Not only prayer for the offender, but praying for a stranger would also have such effect. See Ryan H. Bremner et. al., "'Pray for Those Who Mistreat You': Effects of Prayer on Anger and Aggression," *PSPB* 37 (2011): 830–37.

which the letter previously rebukes the community. These sins are jeopardizing the solidarity of the community. Therefore, bringing back sinners echoes the gathering of the twelve tribes alluded in the opening address,[105] and is an essential way for the community to fulfill the call of perfection stated at the beginning and stressed throughout the letter. The command to engage in mutual confession of sins also helps to create an attitude of humbleness and gentleness (πραΰτης), which is an essential element of true wisdom (3:13) in contrast to the wars and fightings among the community (4:1) and is the necessary attitude for the believers to receive the implanted word of God (1:21).[106] Furthermore, sociological studies on conflict observe that blaming is a common reaction for people in conflict that causes conflict to escalate.[107] By requiring the audience to turn back the sinners, James helps to remove the repercussions of blaming. Moreover, this command connotes an interdependence of fate. The "multitude of sins" in 5:20 is presented not only as a problem of the one who goes astray, but also related to the whole community (5:16). This further strengthens the social identity of group members and hence reinforces the cohesiveness of the group.

In summary, the exhortations on community assembly in Jas 5:13–20 provides a concrete way for building community bonds. Through the community actions of sharing experiences, caring for the weak, mutual confession of sins and turning back those who have gone astray, believers can gain a sense of solidarity, and community rifts are resolved. Moreover, the assembly helps to establish personal relationship among group members, which can reverse the psychological process of dehumanization of the rivals in conflicts. As Budiarto asserts:

> [The process of dehumanization] makes it difficult for conflicting parties to recognize that they are part of a shared human community. Such conditions often lead to feelings of intense hatred and alienation among conflicting parties. ... It is thought that the psychological process of dehumanization might be mitigated or reversed through humanization efforts, the

[105] Johnson, *James*, 337–38.
[106] Verseput observes that the contrast between gentleness and anger in Jas 1:21 was axiomatic in Greco-Roman moral reflection, and suggests that the exhortation to gentleness in James has a particular concern for avoiding communal conflicts. See Verseput, "James 1:19–27," 433–35.
[107] Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 53–55, 103–4.

> development of empathy, the establishment of personal relationships between conflicting parties, and the pursuit of common goals.[108]

Participating in the assembly also reinforces the emotional dimension of social identity by bringing members into meaningful contact with the collective whole, hence promoting members' loyalty and allegiance to the group and making members more willing to work out whatever conflicts and tensions may arise among them.[109] Therefore, by giving instructions for the community assembly, James strengthens the community's sense of unity and common purpose.

4.1.9 Use of Familial Language

Another rhetorical device used by James to strengthen ingroup bonding is its familial languages. Johnson notes that the use of ἀδελφός is particularly intense in James as compared to other NT books.[110] In a total of 108 verses, the term occurs nineteen times, plus one occurrence of ἀδελφή (2:15). In particular, the term is used fifteen times as vocative, addressing the audience directly.

Arzt-Grabner observes that in the Greco-Roman period, the term ἀδελφός is used in letters to people who are not biologically related to express "closeness, solidarity and some kind of bond of engagement."[111] The familial imagery was powerful for indicating closeness of relations in the Greco-Roman society, since kinship relations were still important both politically and economically.[112] Through investigating archaeological evidence from the first century, Harland suggests that such familial language was significant for various organizations as a means of expressing solidarity.[113] In James, the language not only expresses the closeness of relation among his audience, but also emphasizes the intimacy between the author and the audience, as seen in the eleven occasions of the phrase ἀδελφοί μου.[114] Such

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[108] Yohanes Budiarto, "Social Psychological Dimensions of Conflict," *JPsi* 4 (2006): 92.
[109] Kanter, *Commitment*, 72–73.
[110] Johnson, *James*, 51.
[111] Peter Arzt-Grabner, "'Brothers' and 'Sisters' in Documentary Papyri and in Early Christianity," *RivB* 50 (2002): 202.
[112] Nolan and Lenski, *Human Societies*, 167.
[113] Philip Harland, "Familial Dimensions of Group Identity: 'Brothers' (ΑΔΕΛΦΟΙ) in Associations of the Greek East," *JBL* 124 (2005): 491–513.
[114] Paul Trebilco, *Self-designations and Group Identity in the New Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 57–58. Trebilco also notes that the use of ἀδελφός in James is in contrast to

familial language expresses more explicitly the household image already implied in the opening address "the twelve tribes in the Diaspora",[115] stressing the common identity of "belonging to the chosen people" with "reciprocal links of loyalty and solidarity."[116] Therefore, the use of familial language is not merely a stylistic characteristic of James, but also an important vehicle to reinforce the social identity and community cohesiveness.

Another familial term in James that should be noted is πατήρ, which is used to refer to God (1:17, 27; 3:9) and Abraham (2:21). This term correlates with the use of ἀδελφός, since the language of brotherhood points to the audience's common relationship with God the Father, exemplified in Abraham's relation with God.[117] Conversely, attributing God as father makes the whole creation in general and the believers in particular into a huge extended family.[118] Hence, the human-God relation is closely connected to and forms the basis for the familial relationship among the believers.

The familial language in James has several effects on the letter's rhetorical force. First, it establishes a positive relationship between author and audience, which is an essential context for paraenetic letters.[119] According to social identity theories, the perception of belonging to the same category creates "ingroup bias", which leads to, among other effects, people being more open to influence or persuasion by members of the same social category.[120] Hence, by addressing the audience with brotherhood terms, James makes his voice more readily acceptable and more influential to the audience.

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the usual use of the terms "son" or "child" in wisdom literatures, which would have introduced a generational distinction between author and readers.

[115] Wachob, "Household and Kingdom," 158–59 observes that the opening address evokes the story-line of the "seed of Abraham," which would create a household conception for the audience.

[116] Keith, "Les destinataires," 23.

[117] McCartney, *James*, 85.

[118] Peter H. Davids, "God and the Human Situation in the Letter of James," *CTR* 8 (2001): 20.

[119] Duane F. Watson, "An Assessment of the Rhetoric and Rhetorical Analysis of the Letter of James," in *Reading James with New Eyes*, eds. Robert L. Webb and John S. Kloppenborg (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 109.

[120] Turner et. al., *Rediscovering the Social Group*, 154.

Second, familial languages enhance members' emotional commitment to the group. Kanter observes that by presenting the group as a family in itself would have the effect of "replacing or subsuming all other family loyalties," and thus it "enables the community to withstand threats to its existence, both as pressure from the outside and as tension and dissent from inside."[121] Prompting the audience to recognize each other as brothers and sisters serves to establish the solidarity of the group and increases the motivation of believers to cooperate with each other to resolve the conflicts that might occur among the community.

Third, the brotherhood language forms a sense of equality among the audience.[122] This also contributes to the resolving of conflict within the community.[123] Moreover, in view of the different social strata of the believers reflected in the letter, the equality of brotherhood also has very practical social and economic implications in James, since "it is clearly presupposed that there should not be such differences between ἀδελφοί, and that the community should address these issues."[124] Hence the familial language helps James to persuade the audience to support the lowest members among the community, which is an essential action for maintaining its stability and cohesiveness.

Therefore, the use of familial languages in James is an important aspect of the letter's group maintenance strategy. It reinforces the social identity of the audience, both on the cognitive and the emotional level. The sense of equality and the motivation of cooperation it creates in the audience are also essential for resolving conflict among community members.

4.1.10 Claim of Authority

In order to present his teaching to the audience, James must present the exhortations and instructions in the letter as authoritative. Carruth observes that common ways to enhance authoritative claims include direct address, imperatives,

[121] Kanter, *Commitment*, 72.
[122] Trebilco, *Self-designations*, 58–59. Trebilco further observes that the equality in James does not imply a strictly egalitarian community, since authoritative figures, such as teachers and elders, are also envisioned.
[123] Allport, *Nature of Prejudice*, 281.
[124] Trebilco, *Self-designations*, 59.

rhetorical questions, maxims, and the use of present tense.[125] All these rhetorical devices are used frequently in James.

Max Weber classifies three types of legitimate authority, namely, legal, traditional, and charismatic.[126] In James, the legal authority is presented by the letter's appealing to the law, which is described as perfect (1:25) and royal (2:8). It is the standard according to which the believers are to be judged (2:12). However, it must be noted that the law in James is not understood as impersonal system of rules, but is the requirements based on the believers' relation with God. Moreover, James does not attribute the role of administering the law to community leaders or officials. Instead, he emphasizes that God is the only lawgiver and judge (4:11–12). Hence, the authority of the law in James is not legal authority in the strict sense, but shares the characteristics of traditional authority.

Charismatic authority is not explicitly invoked in James. The author nowhere appeals to his own unique personal qualities as a leader. Rather, he acknowledges that only God and Christ have true authority over the faith community, and his own authority is only derived from his being their servant (1:1). However, it may be noted that the gift to teach was also considered to be charismatic in the early church.[127] Hence, charismatic authority may not be completely absent in James, if considered in a wider sense.

The most prominent type of authority presented in James is the authority of tradition. The letter shows the typical feature of early Christian reasoning in claiming its authority as inherited from God. This is already clearly stated in the greeting of the letter, where the author introduces himself to be "a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" (θεοῦ καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δοῦλος). The term δοῦλος "denotes literal bondage to the authority of another," hence it attributes to the author an authority derived from God and puts the author in honour in line with other

[125] Shawn Carruth, O.S.B., "Strategies of Authority: A Rhetorical Study of the Character of the Speaker in Q 6:20-49," in *Conflict and Invention: Literary, Rhetorical, and Social Studies on the Sayings Gospel Q*, ed. John S. Kloppenborg, (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1995), 101–11.
[126] Max Weber, "The Three Types of Legitimate Rule," *BPSI* 4 (1958): 1–11.
[127] See for example Acts 13:1 and Eph 4:11, where teachers are associated with prophets.

honoured "servants of God" in the Hebrew scripture.[128] It could be the most powerful claim to authority given the audience's belief in an existing, active God.[129] Regardless the actual authorship of the letter, the initial audience would have believed they "hear the voice of the brother of *their* Lord."[130] Adamson further links this self-designation with the idea of perfection in James, which primarily means wholehearted, undivided devotion to God.[131] Hence James bears authority not only in his speaking, but also in his enactment of God's decree.

By addressing the audience as "the twelve tribes in the Diaspora," James may also contribute to his claim of authority. Coker asserts that like other Jewish Diaspora letters, it presents James as coming from the centre, represented by James writing from Jerusalem, to the margin of the Diaspora, thus establishing a sense of authority and hierarchy.[132] Hence, this opening address gives James the traditional authority of Jerusalem, which is the holy city chosen by God.

Another way that James claims authority is by invoking the teaching of Jesus Christ. Although James does not explicitly attribute these sayings to Jesus, it is likely that he would expect the audience to recognize the teachings as coming from the authority of Jesus.[133] Through these allusions to the sayings of Jesus, James implicitly claims for himself the authority of a teacher of the faith community, whose primary role is to transmit and expound the words of the Lord. This claim of authority can also be seen more explicitly in James' admonition to the teachers in 3:1–2. The use of first person plural in these verses puts James among the teachers. This would have two effects on James' persuasive effort. On the one hand, it shows that James is not giving his teaching as one standing aloof, but is himself capable of receiving the same strict judgment as a teacher.[134] This helps to establish a favorable impression of the author on the audience. On the other hand, it places James and his

[128] Johnson, *James*, 167–68.
[129] Lauri Thurén, "Is There Biblical Argumentation?" in *Rhetorical Argumentation in Biblical Texts*, eds. Anders Eriksson et. al. (Harrisburg: Trinity Press, 2002), 90–91.
[130] Niebuhr, "Ethics and Anthropology," 225. Emphasis original.
[131] Adamson, *Man and His Message*, 269.
[132] Coker, "Calling on the Diaspora," 442–43.
[133] Kloppenborg, "Emulation," 125–33.
[134] Watson, "James 3:1–12," 55.

teaching as an exemplar for other teachers and their teaching.[135] From a social identity perspective, being an exemplar implies embodying the group prototypes, thus makes one more influential for the group.[136] This consolidates the authority claimed by James.

The final aspect of James' claim on authority of tradition is the manner in which he presents his teaching as something the audience already knows. The word γινώσκω is used three times (1:3; 2:20; 5:20) and οἶδα is used four times (1:19; 3:1; 4:4, 17) in the letter, to assert directly that the audience already knows what James is telling them, or to imply that the audience should have known what is right as James rebukes them of doing otherwise. James thus appeals to the memory of the audience to exhort them to act on the basis of what they know.[137] By so doing, James reinforces the values to which the audience already adheres.[138] Since they are already the people-of-God and have already known the decrees of God, it is, from the author's perspective, only natural that they should accept the authority of James' teaching, which recounts what they have accepted from God.

James' claim to authority is not only important to the letter's rhetorical force, but is also necessary for its group maintenance strategy. Allport states that support of authorities is essential for successful conflict resolution.[139] As some members of the audience are competing with each other, even to the extent of wars and fightings, an appeal to authority may be the only way to settle such conflict. By presenting himself as an authoritative figure to the audience, the voice of James could act as a third-party who may change the interactions of the disputants and divert the destructive path of escalation.[140] This can help to restore harmony among the audience.

[135] Draper, "Apostles, Teachers, and Evangelists," 171.
[136] Hogg and Reid, "Social Identity," 19–20. See also the discussion on leadership in Haslem, *Psychology in Organizations*, 66.
[137] Perdue, "Paraenesis and the Epistle of James," 244.
[138] Thurén, "Risky Rhetoric," 276–77.
[139] Allport, *Nature of Prejudice*, 281.
[140] Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 229, Folger et. al., *Working through Conflict*, 266–67.

4.1.11 Concluding Summary

One of the main aims of James is to resolve the community conflicts and restore harmony among the audience. The instructions in the letter, as well as the rhetorical devices used, serve important functions for the letter's group maintaining purpose. One important aspect of the strategies employed by James is to reinforce the social identity of the audience, so that the community could become more cohesive, and members more motivated to act according to the norms that define and stabilize the community.

The construction of social identities involves three basic elements, which are the cognitive, evaluative, and emotional aspects. From the above investigation, it is seen that all three aspects are involved in James' rhetorical strategies. Cognitively, James affirms the audience's basic identity as the people-of-God, alongside which it is also identified as the elected poor. By stressing their special status before God, James helps the audience to recognize that they belong to a group different from other groups in the Greco-Roman world. God's call and promise makes believers interdependent on each other in their fate, since they have received the same calling and are heading to the same destiny as one people. The recognition of this identity is also enhanced by James' using traditional teaching, such as the commands of the Torah, the sayings of Jesus and the exemplary figures in Israel's history. These traditional materials can enhance "the process of legitimating the social world to the recipient of the instruction."[141] Moreover, James provides instructions that define the norms of the group. These let the believers share a common way of life, hence facilitate their social identification.[142] The norms also offer the group members a way to express their belonging and fidelity to the group, hence strengthens their cognitive identification of the social identity.

On the evaluative level, James makes effort to emphasize the positive distinctiveness of the group, especially in view of negative experiences from both outside and within the group. By stressing the faith community as "the twelve tribes in the Diaspora," and by invoking prototypical exemplars from the Hebrew scripture,

[141] Perdue, "Paraenesis and the Epistle of James," 254.
[142] Hartin, *Spirituality of Perfection*, 91.

the author highlights the status of the audience as the receiver of God's promise to Israel. They have already received the gift of the word of truth and are on the way to the perfection which God calls them to be. This makes the group superior to any rival groups in the evaluation of its members. In particular, by designating the community as the elected poor, James transformed the negative socio-economical experiences of the members from the lower social strata into a positively evaluated characteristic of the faith community. James also encourages the audience to endure in their sufferings, which would include oppression from the world and disorder, due to strife within the community. This exhortation of endurance also helps to maintain the positive distinctiveness of the group despite its seemingly disadvantageous conditions.

Finally, James consolidates the emotional aspect of the audience's social identity by his intensive use of familial languages. Calling each other brothers and sisters gives a sense of intimate bonding between community members and makes them more willing to commit emotionally to the group. Moreover, James encourages community gatherings. As the members gather frequently and take care of the weak members among them, these common life experiences could help them more emotionally attached to the group.

Furthermore, in order to restore order and harmony to the community, ingroup conflicts must be resolved. James' perspective of conflict is mostly akin to the harmony model,[143] which stresses smooth relationships, emphasizes ingroup authorities, rely on cooperativeness and connection, and envisions a long-term, stable outcome. In particular, James' instructions are not presented as impersonal, universal codes, but are grounded on the community's relationship to God and their relation with each other as God's people. Moreover, James does not ascribes much role to the officials of the community, such as teachers and elders, for performing judgment and enforcing order in the community. Instead, James stresses that only God has the right to judge. Believers are to show their wisdom through meekness and peace. In short, James regards ingroup conflicts as incompatible with the community's identity as God's people. The common people-of-God identity of the audience implies that

[143] For a detailed description of this model, see Kazan, "Culture and Conflict Management," 344–48.

disputants within the group should no longer define themselves as competitors with each other. This "removal of negation of the other as a central component of one's own identity" is fundamental to reconciliation.[144] Since commitment is a crucial factor promoting forgiveness,[145] and since people are usually more generous and forgiving to ingroup members,[146] by stressing the common identity of the disputants, James can help to resolve the conflict among the audience.

The teachings of James also provide essential constituents for successful conflict resolution. According to Allport's contact model, conflict resolution requires equal status within the contact situation, intergroup cooperation, common goals, and support of authorities, law, or custom. In James, the people-of-God identity and the concept of elected poor provides a basis of equal status of group members. The command to support the members in need and the encouragement to the community assembly provide chances and motivations for cooperation. The promise of God, with its call to perfection, provides a common goal for the faith community. Lastly, the Torah and the teachings of Jesus, as well as James' role as the servant of God, provide the necessary authorities to define the group norms and settle disputes.

Therefore, one sees that various features in James function to strengthen the ingroup bonding among the audience. These are important aspects of James' group maintenance strategy. However, to maintain a strong social identity and group cohesiveness, it is also necessary to resist attacks from outgroups. Hence one can also see in James efforts to sharpen the group boundaries, in order to avoid members from being drawn away from the group. How James responds to outgroup threats will be the focus of the next section.

4.2 Group Boundary

In order to strengthen the cohesiveness of the ingroup, strategies that involve relations with outgroups are often used. Sociological studies have suggested that

[144] Bar-Siman-Tov, *Conflict Resolution*, 119.
[145] For a study in the relation between commitment and forgiveness, see Eli J. Finkel et. al., "Dealing With Betrayal in Close Relationships: Does Commitment Promote Forgiveness?" *JPSP* 82 (2002): 956–74.
[146] Hewstone, "Ultimate Attribution Error," 311–35.

derogation of outgroups can serve a variety of functions for the ingroup, such as increasing the positive distinctiveness of the ingroup.[147] In particular, a social-scientific experiment conducted by Wagner and Ward shows that

> a person will evaluate another in-group member more positively and assume greater similarity with him or her if, compared to a situation in which only the in-group is present, the person finds the in-group embedded in a context of relevant out-groups. This will occur to an even stronger degree if the in-group is presented as being in conflict with relevant out-groups.[148]

This means that the positive value people attribute to the ingroup tends to increase when a relevant outgroup is involved for assessment. Hence, casting outgroups in a negative light can be an effective way to reinforce the solidarity of a community.

In James, there are two pairs of diametrical contrast. One is between the faithful poor and the wicked rich; the other is between friends of God and friends of the world. These two pairs of contrast put a sharp boundary between the faith community and groups that holds incompatible values. By labeling the ingroup positively and the outgroups negatively, the groups are polarized, and hence a social distance that insulates the ingroup is created.[149] This contributes to maintaining the distinctiveness of the faith community. However, it must be noted that the polemic in James is not directed at concrete outgroups. The rich and the friends of the world in James are not only referring to non-members of the audience, but rather are designations for members of the community who deviate from the value and behavioral norms of the group. For James, those who adhere to values of the world are to be viewed as outsiders, who must repent and be brought back to become true members of the community. The group boundary in James is thus, as Lockett puts it, "strong but permeable."[150] The boundary in James is not drawn so much between sociological groups than between different sets of values.[151] Nevertheless, social groups do provide James with the background and framework to define the boundaries of the faith community.

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[147] Rothbart and Lewis, "Cognitive Processes," 347–82.
[148] Wagner and Ward, "Variation of Outgroup Presence," 243.
[149] For more discussion on the use of labeling, see Bruce J. Malina and Jerome H. Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names: The Social Value of Labels in Matthew* (Sonoma: Polebridge, 1988), 8–67.
[150] Lockett, "Strong and Weak Lines," 391–405.
[151] Bauckham, *James*, 106–7.

4.2.1 The Wicked Rich

There are several passages in James that give a sharp rebukes to the rich (1:10–11; 2:6–7; 4:13–5:6). James' teaching concerning the rich is based on the one hand on socio-economical reality of the early church, and on the other hand on the stereotyping of the faith community as God's elected poor. The majority of members in the early faith community would be from the relatively lower social strata.[152] In the socio-economic environment of the Greco-Roman world, these people were often exploited and oppressed. Joining the faith community, which was a minority in the society and held values and practices very different from the pagan world, only made them more marginalized in the society. Hence, although Kloppenborg correctly observes that "the contrast of rich and poor was a standard rhetorical trope in Graeco-Roman moralizing literature,"[153] the teaching on rich and poor in James should not be denied as a response to actual social experience of the early church.[154] The poor members of the church indeed suffered much from the oppression of the wicked rich in the society.

These negative experiences could make the members less willing to identify with the group. Moreover, the rich could be a strong attraction for believers, thus competing with the faith community for their fidelity. This would further weaken the cohesiveness of the community. To avoid these negative effects on the audience, James must distance the believers from the attraction of the rich and show the community of the poor in a positive light. In this regard, although James seems to identify the rich as the community's enemies (2:6b–7),[155] he does not use the strategy of social movement by encouraging vengeance against rich people.[156] Instead, James employs social creativity by changing the values assigned to the attributes of the groups so that comparisons which were previously negative become positive.

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[152] Judge, *Social Pattern*, 52 comments on a common assertion that "the Christian groups were constituted from the lower orders of society ..., the observation is correct". The description of the agrarian societies in Lenski's study of social stratification also indicates that the majority of people at the time of the Roman empire are among the low-power-and-privileged group. See Lenski, *Power and Privilege*, 284. Hence, it would be natural that most members in the early church were of low socio-economic status.
[153] Kloppenborg, "Poverty and Piety," 228.
[154] Maynard-Reid, *Poverty and Wealth*, 40.
[155] Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, 90.
[156] Tamez, "James," 373.

Through a serious of negative portrayals of the rich, James problematizes the socio-economical as well as ideological structure of the Greco-Roman society.[157] The wealth of this world is deemed to be valueless, since it, together with its possessors, is destined to pass away (1:10–11). The wealth offered by the society is presented also as evil, since those people in possession of it are involved in behaviours in opposition to God's will and hence inviting God's judgment. In particular, the last sentence in 5:6 (οὐκ ἀντιτάσσεται ὑμῖν) is likely to be a rhetorical question referring to God's judgment to the wicked and proud (4:6), expressing the certainty of the judgment of the wicked rich.[158] Hence, believers should keep adhered to the faith community and stick to the norms of the group as the elected poor, since otherwise they will face the same judgment as the wicked rich (2:12–13). A sharp boundary is thus placed between the audience and the rich to avoid believers being drawn away from committing to the ingroup.

However, for James, Christian identity is not constructed primarily through rejecting outsiders, but by accepting God's call to his people and pursuing perfection before God.[159] Hence, rich people are not just excluded from the community. Rather, James urges the believers who may be economically advantageous not to regard themselves by their socio-economic status, but to adopt the identity and value of the poor. In James, the rich is stereotypically associated with arrogant attitudes (4:13–17) and irreverent, exploitative behaviours (2:6–7; 5:1–6), while the poor are depicted as faithful and humble. Such stereotyping can be a "powerful social weapon" for polarizing rival groups and deterring deviants of group norms.[160] Negative portrayals of the rich serve James' primary aim to exhort the audience to the values and practices he holds for the community,[161] and hence stereotypically identify with the poor in the community. Even though the socio-economical status of the believers may be different, they must now become one group with a shared identity. Especially, the wealthy members must redefine their identity, attitude and behaviour accordingly.

[157] Kloppenborg, "Poverty and Piety," 232.
[158] Davids, *James*, 180, Schökel, "James 5:2," 73–76.
[159] Lockett, "Strong and Weak Lines," 402.
[160] Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 260.
[161] Batten, "Ideological Strategies," 25.

In summary, the harsh rebukes in James against the rich function in various ways for James' group maintenance strategy. First, it creates between the audience and the rich oppressors a sense of opposition, which could help to consolidate the community's boundary against the surrounding social world.[162] By placing the audience against a rival group that threatens the community, James could induce more pro-social and cooperative behaviours among the audience.[163] Second, by portraying the rich as outsiders, James "constructs a positive identity and ideology for his audience as the honourable poor who must care for the poor among them."[164] This levels the original socio-economical diversity between the members and renders them equal in status. This also promotes the support of the lowly members of the community and hence contributes to its stability. Third, derogating the rich restores the positive distinctiveness of the faith community which experiences oppressions and exploitations. This rhetorical move thus reduces the attraction of the surrounding society to the audience and increases the value of commitment to the faith community. Therefore, polemic against the rich plays important roles in sharpening the group boundaries of the faith community and thus helps to reinforce its cohesiveness by promoting equality and removing the rifts between group members.

4.2.2 Friends of the World

The opposition between the wicked rich and the faithful poor in James is part of a more general dichotomy, namely, the opposition between friends of God and friends of the world.[165] The word κόσμος appears five times in James (1:27; 2:5; 3:6; 4:4(x2)), each time used in a negative sense as opposite to God.[166] It refers "to something more than the material world or humanity in general; it is the entire cultural value system or world order which is hostile toward what James frames as the divine value system."[167] The incompatibility between these two value systems entails believers to choose between them. This forms a Two Ways motif in James. Although the word ὁδός is used only three times in James (1:8; 2:25; 5:20), with only

[162] Coser, *Functions of Social Conflict*, 87–104.
[163] Dovidio and Morris, "Effects of Stress," 145–49, Northrup, "Dynamic of Identity," 79.
[164] Batten, "Ideological Strategies," 10.
[165] Hartin, "Poor in the Epistle of James," 148.
[166] Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 202–4.
[167] Lockett, *Purity and Worldview*, 117.

the last occurrence clearly reveals a Two Way metaphor, commentators have observed that the polar opposition of the Two Ways motif indeed undergirds the inclusion and shaping of James's material.[168] Those who follows the way of God will receive the blessing of the crown of life (1:12), while those following the way of the world, which manifests especially in the evil desires, will face punishment and death (1:15).

However, it may be noted that James does not present the Two Ways mainly in forms of virtue and vice lists, as other Two Ways material often does. While the epistle gives many instructions on personal and communal behaviours, it shows a much deeper concern for the inner disposition of the believers. The central vice of which James accuses the audience is their dividedness, that is, claiming faith in God but still showing attitudes and behaviours of the world. This is expressed first in the admonition in 1:5–8. The person who doubt (διακρίνω) when asking God for wisdom is described as "double-minded/two-souled" (δίψυχος). Hence, the doubting here is not referring only to suspecting whether God will give or not, but more importantly to an uncertain or divided loyalty.[169] Such attitude is in stark contrast with God's single-mindedness, as expressed in his giving "single-mindedly" (ἁπλῶς).[170] To be on the way of life, one must have wholehearted devotion to God, and reject any influence from the world.

The dichotomy of the Two Ways is most strongly expressed in 4:4. The vocative μοιχαλίδες (adulteresses) that begins the verse is striking not only because a feminine noun is used to address the audience,[171] but more importantly because it shows a harsh attitude of the author towards the audience, whereas in other parts of

[168] Johnson, *James*, 14. In particular, Overman, "Problems with Pluralism," 269 identifies 1:14–20, 2:8–11, and 4:1–4 as showing most clearly the Two Ways tradition.
[169] Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*,197. See also the discussion on the meaning of διακρίνω in Peter Spitaler, "Διακρίνεσθαι in Mt 2:21, Mk 11:13, Acts 10:20, Rom 4:20, 14:23, Jas 1:6 and Jude 22," *NovT* 49 (2007): 1–39.
[170] Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 197.
[171] Some manuscripts have μοιχοὶ καὶ μοιχαλίδες, a reading accepted in KJV. The shorter text is nevertheless better attested. Other translations use the masculine "adulterers" (NAB, NET, NJB, NRSV) or more neutral terms such as "adulterous people" (ESV, NIV) or "unfaithful creatures" (RSV). However, the feminine vocative is probably used intentionally to awaken the audience.

the letter the audience is usually called "my (beloved) brothers".[172] However, this does not mean that the author is here addressing non-believers.[173] Rather, James uses this word to express the pressing need for the audience to repent from their misplaced social and religious commitments.[174] The image of adulteress can be traced back to the description of the unfaithful Israel as adulteress in the Hebrew scripture (Hos 3:1; Ezek 16:38; 23:1–45),[175] hence linking the admonition back to the "twelve tribes" in the opening address of the letter to stress the incompatibility of the audience's behaviour—those accused in the previous parts of the letter—with their identity as the people-of-God.[176] By invoking the image of adulteress, James is presenting the world as an idol that competes with God for the fidelity of his people.[177] This image may also be alluding to the adulteress in Prov. 30:20, who denies her sin and pretends that she has done nothing wrong.[178] Such an image accuses the audience of ignoring their sin before God. This harsh rebuke, together with "sinners" (ἁμαρτωλοί) and "double-minded" (δίψυχοι) in 4:8, expresses the severity of the believers' error.

The metaphor of the adulteress is expounded in the diametric opposition between God and the world that follows. James stresses that friendship with the world makes one an enemy of God, thus expressing a clear-cut boundary between God's people and the world. In Wilson's words, James urges the audience to "recognize the *agonistic character* of reality."[179] This polar opposition can be seen as underlying the moral teachings in the whole letter.[180] Here the use of the language of friendship is not merely figurative, but refers to the concept of friendship in the

[172] Lockett, *Purity and Worldview*, 154 observes further that in the whole section of 3:13–4:10, the author does not refer to his audience as brothers.
[173] Hort, *James*, 91–92 suggests that James has included non-believers in the rebuke in 4:4. He also suggests that adulteress refers to literal sin of adultery. However, within the context of Jas 4:1–10, such interpretation can hardly be sustained.
[174] Lockett, *Purity and Worldview*, 135.
[175] So Davids, *James*, 160–61, Johnson, *James*, 278, Martin, *James*, 148, McKnight, *James*, 332, Brosend, *James and Jude*, 109, Moo, *James*, 186–87, Wilson, "James 4:7–10," 371. Such an interpretation is refuted in John J. Schmitt, "You Adulteresses! The Image in James 4:4," *NovT* 28 (1986): 331–34. However, Schmitt's argument is not conclusive.
[176] Wilson, "James 4:7–10," 372 asserts that the charge of adultery in 4:4 responds to problems suggested in the wider context of James.
[177] Adamson, *Man and His Message*, 170.
[178] Schmitt, "You Adulteresses," 336–37. See also Cargal, "When Is a Prostitute," 124. It is plausible that James is here alluding to Proverbs since a few sentences later, James directly cites Prov 3:34 in Jas 4:6.
[179] Wilson, "James 4:7–10," 370. Emphasis original.
[180] van de Sandt, "James 4:1-4," 39.

Greco-Roman world. The notion of friendship in the Hellenistic culture denotes a complete sharing of a view of reality, a way of measuring value. Johnson observes that from an ancient Hellenist perspective, being friends is to be of "one mind".[181] This idea of friendship may well be in view when James alludes to Isa 41:8 to emphasize that Abraham is a friend of God. By following the decree of God to sacrifice Isaac, Abraham shows his total alliance with God's mind. This concept of friendship informs also the meaning of the word δίψυχος in James.[182] As the audience of James does not show total commitment to God, they cannot be called friends of God. This is the fundamental reason for the community conflicts described in 4:1–3.[183] Hence, to resolve the wars and fightings in the community, it is necessary to keep the strict boundary with the world. Mingling with the world destroys the harmony of the community, as well as jeopardizes the basic identity of the believers as God's people.

One of the consequences of being friends of the world is self-deception.[184] The admonition against self-deception is clearly stated in Jas 1 (1:16, 22, 26). Self-deception is incompatible with believers' faith in God, since it leads them away from correct perception of the truth, which is a gift from God that bestows in the first place the people-of-God identity to the believers (1:18). In particular, McCartney observes that the expression ἀπατῶν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ (deceiving his heart) in 1:26 is used in Job 31:27[185] to refer to idolatry.[186] Hence the caution for self-deception is related to James' reproaching the audience as friends of the world and adulteresses. Believers involved in such self-deception blur the boundaries between the faith community and the world. Moreover, the self-deception in 1:22, which refers to hearing but not doing the word, shows that the audience is not receiving God's implanted word in meekness (1:21). This in turn finds expression in human anger (1:19), which is "divisive, destroying community and cohesion by means of hasty speech."[187] Hence, to avoid such destructive results in the community, believers must keep the boundary

[181] Luke T. Johnson, "An Introduction to the Letter of James," in *Brother of Jesus, Friend of God*, 33.
[182] Batten, *Friendship and Benefaction*, 44.
[183] Kloppenborg, "Emulation," 135.
[184] Cheung, *Hermeneutics of James*, 205–6.
[185] LXX reads ἠπατήθη λάθρᾳ ἡ καρδία μου.
[186] Dan G. McCartney, "Self-Deception in James," *CTR* n.s. 8/2 (2011): 36.
[187] Lockett, *Purity and Worldview*, 112.

between true and false perceptions of their relation to God and avoid showing traits of being friends of the world.

In response to the believers' being friends of the world, James exhort the audience to maintain their purity as the people-of-God and rejects the values and practices of the world, for "it is only when James' readers maintain a degree of separation from ὁ κόσμος (thus achieving purity) that they are able to begin to achieve perfection,"[188] and hence keep their identity as "the twelve tribes". The author adopts some of the traditional languages and notions of cultic purity to urge the audience to maintain a moral and cultural boundary with the surrounding world.[189] The boundary with the world is expressed externally by the norms about behaviour, relationship, and speech.[190] However, in James, the concern is not about sociological boundaries in terms of group membership, but about conflicting worldviews and value systems.[191] James does not reject particular outgroups, nor does he explicitly devaluates life in this world,[192] but he warns against ingroup members mixing with attitudes and practices incompatible with their identity. In this sense, James sharpens the group boundaries of the faith community.

In light of social-scientific studies, posing a sharp boundary between the audience and "the world" is crucial for James' effort to maintain the cohesiveness of the community, since to develop commitment in its members a group must be sharply differentiated from its environment.[193] This is especially necessary when competing social worlds present alternatives that grow increasingly attractive to ingroup members.[194] For James' audience, the surrounding society was indeed

[188] Lockett, "Unstained," 72.
[189] See the exploration of James' use of purity languages in Lockett, *Purity and Worldview*, 107–45 and Repschinski, "Purity," 388–92.
[190] Ben Witherington, III, *Jesus the Sage: The Pilgrimage of Wisdom* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), 246.
[191] Bauckham, *James*, 106–7. In particular, it is well observed that although James refers to the Torah in many passages, it does not refer to ceremonial, cultic, or ritual laws. Hence what James concerns is the moral boundary instead of the sociological boundary of the faith community. See for example Hartin, "Ethics," 292–93.
[192] John Painter, "James as the First Catholic Epistle," *Int* 60 (2006): 248 observes that although the metaphor of the Diaspora has the potential to devalue life in the world, James does not draw such an implication.
[193] Kanter, *Commitment*, 71.
[194] Berger, *Sacred Canopy*, 29–30.

attractive. On the one hand, the Greco-Roman world provided opportunities of social-economical prosperity.[195] On the other hand, the early church's experiences of oppression tempted it to form some type of compromise with the world.[196] Hence, James depicts the people-of-God and the friends of the world as two diametrically opposing entities. To join the former is to be given life, while to mingle with the latter is to abandon God and to experience death.[197] Furthermore, James regards those who bring disharmony into the community, whether by partiality, hostile speeches, wars and fightings, or boasting about ones wisdom, as going against their own nature as God's people.[198] This could have an effect of suppressing such community destructing behaviours among the group. It also helps to reduce the dissonance generated in members from observing inconsistent behaviours in other group members.[199] By rendering those showing such attitudes and behaviours as outgroup, the threat on other members' identification with the community is minimized, and hence the solidarity of the group is protected.

4.2.3 Concluding Summary

From a social-identity perspective, outgroup derogation is an important strategy for fortifying the social identity of ingroup members and hence reinforcing the solidarity of a group. In James, one finds two prominent outgroup stereotypes, namely, the wicked rich and the friends of the world. These people are depicted as the enemies of the audience and of God. By constructing polar oppositions between the faith community and these stereotypical outgroups, James attempts to sharpen the boundaries of the community. In particular, the opposite destinies of the ingroup and the outgroup under the judgment of God imply that the members of the faith community should not and could not mix with the world. Hence the eschatological expectation of judgment serves to fortify the boundaries of the faith community.

The wicked rich and the friends of the world are not concrete rival outgroups of James' audience, but are constructed entities that embody the values of the larger

[195] Tamez, "James," 371.
[196] Davids, "Theological Perspectives," 101.
[197] Strange, *Moral World*, 22–23.
[198] William R. Baker, "Who's Your Daddy? Gendered Birth Images in the Soteriology of the Epistle of James," *EQ* 79 (2007): 206.
[199] Norton et. al., "Vicarious Dissonance," 47–48.

society that are incompatible with the people-of-God identity of the faith community. James is not attacking a particular outgroup. Rather, the main concern is ingroup members adopting these values and behaviours and hence jeopardizing the special identity and the harmony of the group. However, the depictions of the friends of the world, especially the wicked rich, are not constructed *ex nihilo*, but based upon actual observations and experiences with people and groups in the Greco-Roman society. Therefore, the stereotypical outgroups in James are built upon actual sociological boundaries and in turn reinforce the boundary between the audience and those who hold values that James rebukes. Heeding to James' teachings, the audience would need to maintain a certain degree of separation from the surrounding society, though not necessarily in a sectarian way.

4.3 Conclusion

Some commentators has observed that the identity of the faith community as the people-of-God, the heir of God's promise to Israel, is central to the letter of James.[200] The instructions, encouragements, reproaches, and exhortations in the letter are built upon this ground. The foregoing discussion builds on those insights to explore how the teachings in James serve the purpose of maintaining group solidarity. With the assistance of social-scientific theories about social identity and conflict reduction, the above study investigates how the rhetoric of James contributes to establishing and reinforcing the social identity of the audience, in order to strengthen the cohesiveness of the community and resolve conflicts among its members.

The identity of the faith community is stressed in the very beginning in the opening address. It is stressed throughout the whole letter, and is further articulated at the end of the letter through exhortations on the assembly of believers. This identity implies that the community has received God's call to perfection, which is both an eschatological promise and a target to be pursued in the present. This common identity, with its shared goal of perfection, becomes a unifying factor for the community, since members from different social strata are equalized. Moreover, individual ambitions which lead to competitions among members are rendered

[200] See for example Lockett, *Purity and Worldview*, 180–81, Wachob, *Voice of Jesus*, 195.

insignificant, even contradictory to the community's identity. As James attempts to reinforce believers' identification with the faith community, the audience would become more willing to follow the exhortations given in the letter. This not only restores order and discipline in the community, but also strengthens the solidarity and stability of the group by providing supports to the lowly members, including the poor and the weak, and by promoting meekness instead of competition, so that aggressive behaviours and speeches would be suppressed and conflicts among disputants could be de-escalated, leading to resolution and reconciliation.

James is not polemical against concrete rival groups. However, values and practices in the wider society provide the author with outgroup stereotypes in opposition to the ingroup prototype as embodied in the examples of God, Christ, and other exemplars in the letter. Those who show adherence to these outgroup stereotypes are casted as outgroup in the letter. This sharpens the group boundaries of the audience. By demeaning outgroups, the positive distinctiveness of the community is stressed, and hence the social identity is reinforced. This enhances members' commitment to the group and therefore strengthening group cohesiveness. Moreover, the disparagement of outgroups serves to encourage some degree of separation from the wider society. This protects ingroup members from being attracted by competitive worldviews and values.

In the previous chapter, it is argued that James is responding to actual conflict situations among the audience. In this chapter, how the letter could serve to resolve these conflicts and tensions so that harmony in the community can be restored is explored with the aid of social-scientific theories on group dynamics. This purpose of group maintenance can be viewed as a unifying theme in the whole letter. The various admonitions and exhortations, although seemingly unrelated to each other, are indeed serving the same aim of increasing cohesiveness in the faith community. Hence, the theme of group maintenance can provide a lens to perceive the coherence of the whole letter and help one to better understand the message of this "epistle of straw".

Chapter 5
Community Tensions in the *Didache*

This chapter turns to the *Didache* to analyze the community tensions reflected in that document. It will be argued that the *Didache* is not an arbitrary collection of traditional teachings, but a coherent document that utilizes traditional materials to respond to the need of the community. O'Loughlin maintains that the materials in the *Didache* "was assembled with a specific situation in mind rather than planned as some ideal guide to Christian praxis," and the document's interest in day-to-day problems allows one to see how the early Christians believed and behaved.[1] From the regulations given in the document, one may discern the concerns of the "Didachist" who assembled and redacted the materials into this final form, presumably in response to specific situations. In particular, both intra-communal tensions and pressure from other groups, which threatened the solidarity of that early community of Jesus followers, can be seen reflected in the *Didache*. How the text of the *Didache* reveals these situations will be explored.

5.1 The *Didache* Community/ies

Some preliminary remarks about the *Didache* community should be made before engaging in a more detailed analysis of the situation of the community. First, it seems evident that the *Didache* community consisted of a number of geographically spread communities. This can be seen from the reference to the possibility of absence of residential prophets (*Did* 13:4), which suggests that a number of communities are in view, some have residential prophets and others do not.[2] The concession to baptismal water in *Did* 7 also suggests a variety of geographical locations. In view of the *Didache* presenting itself as an authoritative teaching to various Christian communities, Pardee suggests that the *Didache* community may consist of a strong "mother" church and a number of satellite

[1] Thomas O'Loughlin, "The *Didache* as a Source for Picturing the Earliest Christian Communities: The Case of the Practice of Fasting," in *Christian Origins: Worship, Belief and Society*, ed. Kieran J. O'Mahony, JSNTSup 241 (Sheffield: Academic Press, 2003), 87–91.
[2] Bruno Steimer, *Vertex Traditionis: Die Gattung der altchristlichen Kirchenordnungen*, BZNW 63 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1992) 261–62.

communities of lesser status.[3] Such a suggestion is plausible, though difficult to prove. Nevertheless, it seems likely that those local communities that accepts the authority of the *Didache* are closely related to each other, and hence in this sense form one larger Christian community.

Second, although the Jewishness of the *Didache* might suggest a Jewish-Christian community,[4] the long title and the moral teaching directed against pagan practices indicate that Gentile Christians also formed an important part of the community.[5] From the *Didache* one can see that the community was under both external and internal pressure. On the one hand, there are evidence of competitions with other Jewish communities.[6] The community, while still strongly influenced by its Jewish roots, was concerned in defining itself against the non-Christian Jews. On the other hand, internal tensions within the community are also reflected in the *Didache*. It is likely that there were subgroups with "potentially disintegrative normative claims" which threatened to cause division in the community.[7] How these internal and external tensions are reflected in the *Didache* will be investigated in more detail in the following discussion. It suffices to observe here that the *Didache* reflects a Christian community that struggles to establish its identity by preserving and elaborating the apostolic heritage.[8]

5.2 Church Orders (*Did* 11–15)

The investigation of community tensions reflected in the *Didache* would start from *Did* 11–15, since this section is usually regarded as a late redaction layer,[9] and hence would reflect more clearly the community situation at the period the final form of the document was produced. Also, this part of the *Didache* shows most obviously the existence of threats to the harmony of the community. *Did* 11–15 contains

[3] Pardee, "Visualizing," 85.
[4] The form and content of the *Didache*, especially those in the Two Ways section, show strong adherence to Jewish traditions. For a detailed discussion, see van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*.
[5] van de Sandt, "Essentials of Ethics," 259.
[6] See the review above in section 2.2.4.
[7] Ian H. Henderson, "*Didache* and Orality in Synoptic Comparison," *JBL* 111/2 (1992): 293. See also van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 31–35.
[8] Helmut Koester, "The Apostolic Fathers and the Struggle for Christian Identity," *ExpT* 117 (2006): 133.
[9] Audet, *La Didachè*, 104–20, Jefford, *Sayings of Jesus*, 142–45, Garrow, *Matthew's Dependence*, 150–53, Pardee, "Visualizing," 74–78.

regulations concerning various classes of people among the community, including charismatic passers-by, local officials, Christians seeking to settle within the community, and general members of the community. Depending on the different situations of these groups, various guidelines and exhortations are given. However, all these instructions have a common objective of maintaining unity and harmony in the community.[10] Every member or new-arrival is to be treated in proper ways, so that everyone could receive appropriate support and respect on the one hand, and the community would not be abused by charlatans and swindlers on the other. These regulations in the *Didache* reflect that there were real threats to the order of the community.

5.2.1 Teachers, Apostles and Prophets (*Did* 11)

Did 11 deal with several types of charismatics coming to the community. Those who teach (ὁ διδάσκων) are mentioned in 11:1–2, apostles (ἀπόστολος) and prophets (προφήτης) are mentioned together in 11:3. Before going into the details of the instructions, a remark should be made on the use of these terms in this section of the *Didache*.

At first sight, it may seem that 11:1–2 refers to a group of teachers alongside with the apostles and prophets in *Did* 11.[11] However, such an interpretation is not supported upon a closer look at the text.[12] First, unlike the instructions concerning apostles and prophets, there are no details about how those who teach are to be received. The focus of 11:1–2 is on distinguishing true and false teachings, rather than teachers as a distinct group. Second, as Niederwimmer observes, 11:1–2 functions more as a transition to a new theme.[13] This transitional function is highlighted by the phrase "all that has been said above" (ταῦτα πάντα τὰ προειρημένα). Moreover, the warning about false teaching is similar to the warning in 6:1, which is the conclusion of the Two Ways section. Similarly, 11:1–2 concludes

[10] Dirk G. Lange, "The *Didache*: Liturgy Redefining Life," *Worship* 78 (2004): 215.
[11] See for example Georg Schöllgen, "Didache: Zwölf-Apostel-Lehre," in Georg Schöllgen, Wilhelm Geerlings, *Zwölf-Apostel-Lehre, Apostolische Überlieferung*, FC 1 (Freiburg: Herder, 1991), 58–59.
[12] See for example van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 342–43 and André de Halleux, "Ministers in the Didache," in *The* Didache *in Modern Research*, ed. Jonathan A. Draper (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 304.
[13] Niederwimmer, "Itinerant Radicalism," 323.

the previous section, and brings forward the following section. Third, 11:10 indicates that the prophets also perform a function of teaching.[14] This reduces the probability that the teachers in 11:1–2 are mentioned as a distinct group. Therefore, upon balance, it is more preferable not to view teachers as a group alongside apostles and prophets in *Did* 11.

Hence, there remain two groups: apostles and prophets. It is possible that these two groups have some overlap between them. However, it seems to be going too far to completely identify these two groups as the same.[15] One particular evidence against identifying the two groups is the short duration the apostles are allowed to stay among the community (11:5), which makes it difficult for them to give teaching or any other form of leadership in the community,[16] and much less chance for the community to discern their authenticity by their behaviour as described in 11:10.

The questions concerning the identity, origin, and functions of the wandering apostles are widely discussed. It must be admitted that the *Didache* itself does not give much hint to these questions. It is not necessary to see them as itinerants having denounced all property of their own.[17] The term ἀπόστολος is not defined by lack of home and property in the New Testament. Rather, the term is defined by the mission they received. Even though Jesus commands his apostles not to carry money with them (Matt 10:9–10), it only applies to the manner of their mission journey, and is not depicted as a permanent state of the apostles.[18] Indeed, in the New Testament, one sees that apostles sometimes stay in one place for a long time.[19] Moreover, the

[14] van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 342.
[15] So de Halleux, "Ministers," 305–7, Milavec, *Didache*, 438–39.
[16] Draper, "Aposthes, Teachers, and Evangelists," 156. Van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 335 further suggests that the absence of apostles in *Did* 13, 15 indicates that they are not supposed to settle down within the community.
[17] Jonathan A. Draper, "First-fruits and the Support of Prophets, Teachers, and the Poor in *Didache* 13 in Relation to New Testament Parallels," in *Trajectories through the New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers*, eds. Andrew Gregory and Christopher Tuckett (Oxford: OUP, 2005), 226–27, contra Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 175.
[18] Milavec, *Didache*, 457 observes that nothing in the *Didache* suggests that apostles renounced their possessions so as to be radically poor for God's sake. In fact, apostles dependent on the community to supply their need was a condition common to travelers in the ancient world.
[19] The most obvious example is Paul's staying in Corinth for eighteen months and in Ephesus for three years.

fact that the *Didache* does not mention apostles as settled begs an explanation, especially since prophets are allowed to settle in the community (*Did* 13:1). In view of these reasons, it would at least be plausible that the apostles mentioned in the *Didache* were Christians being sent for some mission on behalf of the church, most likely for the preaching of the gospel, so that they were only passing through the community to their final destination.[20]

Although the roles of the apostles are not clearly stated in the *Didache*, the instructions for the community's treatment of them are. Three instructions are mentioned. First, they are to be received as the Lord (11:4). Second, they are to be tested for authenticity by the length of their stay (11:5). Third, regulations are given for their leaving the community (11:6). The last two instructions are so precise that they suggest actual problems the community had encountered concerning the apostles.[21] The most obvious explanation for these rules is that there were people who claimed themselves to be apostles, but were in fact imposters wanting to exploit the community's generosity. It is likely that this most obvious explanation is indeed what the *Didache* community concerns.

Besides economic loss, one may ask what further damage these false apostles, or "false prophets" (ψευδοπροφήτης),[22] may do to the community. Here, sociological studies may come into help. When people feel being exploited, one of the most natural reactions is a sense of distrust, which arouses "a perception of threat in ambiguous circumstances, and this can lead to conflict."[23] It is observed that "when individuals are in a suspicious state of mind, they are likely to engage in a sense-

[20] This view agrees with Milavec's comment that "*Did* 11:5–6 presuppose that these apostle-prophets have a mission elsewhere and that, from the vantage point of the Didache community, they are only passing through," though it does not agree with his identification of the apostles and the prophets, nor his explanation of the origin of these people. See Milavec, *Didache*, 441.

[21] Jürgen K. Zangenberg, "Reconsructing the Social and Religious Milieu of the Didache: Observations and Possible Results," in *Matthew, James, and Didache*, eds. Huub van de Sandt and Jürgen K. Zangenberg, (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 63 comments that "abuse of Christian morale was too serious to show more generosity."

[22] Draper, "Wandering Charismatics," 564 observes that is a common word in the Septuagint and has a general reference to anyone who falsely claims divine authority. Hence this term does not imply the identification of the apostles and the prophets.

[23] Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 25.

making process biased toward personalizing events."[24] This may have far-reaching results, including aggressive behaviour[25] and retaliation[26] on the individual's part. These emotions and behaviours may then escalate to the group level through emotion contagion. Even if such fierce reactions are not provoked, the negative experience of being exploited would still generate in group members a negative perception of the group, especially when the offenders are being regarded as an insider or even some sort of leader, such as those who claim to be apostles in the early church. As a leader, they are supposed to embody the prototype of the group.[27] If such figures are perceived and experienced in negative light, it could generate strong dissonance within group members.[28] This will then weaken the social identity of group members, thus endangering the cohesiveness of the group.

The second group of charismatic in *Did* 11 are the prophets. The text does not state explicitly that they are itinerant, and nothing about their duration of stay is mentioned. However, given the context of *Did* 11, it seems more likely that itinerant prophets are in view, in contrast to those who settle in the community (13:1).[29] The instructions in 11:7–12 concern mainly the testing of the prophets. Although 11:7 states that any prophet speaking in Spirit is not to be tested, the following instructions nevertheless state actions that, if a prophet does when speaking in Spirit, expose him as a false prophet. These actions include ordering for a meal and eat of it (11:9), and requesting money or other things for himself (11:12). Like the regulations about apostles, these instructions about prophets obviously aim at avoiding the generosity of the community being abused.

Moreover, the prophets are expected to do what they teach (11:10), and to show the way of the Lord (11:8). It is debated what "the way of the Lord" (τοὺς

[24] Korsgaard et al., "Multilevel," 1231, Kramer, "Paranoid Cognition," 251–75.
[25] Joel H. Neuman and Robert A. Baron "Workplace Violence and Workplace Aggression: Evidence Concerning Specific Forms, Potential Causes, and Preferred Targets," *JM* 24 (1998): 402–6.
[26] See Laurie J. Barclay, et. al., "Exploring the Role of Emotions in Injustice Perceptions and Retaliation," *JAP* 90 (2005): 629–43, Daniel P. Skarlicki and Robert Folger, "Retaliation in the Workplace: The Roles of Distributive, Procedural, and Interactional Justice," *JAP* 82 (1997): 434–43.
[27] Haslem, *Psychology in Organizations*, 66.
[28] Glasford et. al., "Intragroup Dissonance," 1057–64.
[29] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 178. Indeed, one may observe a chiastic structure in *Did* 11–13: (A) passing charismatics (11:3–12); (B) passing non-charismatics (12:1–2); (B') settling non-charismatics (12:3–5); (A') settling charismatics (13:1–7).

τρόπους κυρίου) means. Some suggest that it means a lifestyle of voluntary poverty in conformity to the earthly Jesus, renouncing home, family and income.[30] However, Milavec argues forcefully that homelessness is not the essential characteristic of Jesus' earthly life, and such external traits would not be sufficient for the community to distinguish between true and false prophets.[31] Moreover, in view of the resemblance of thought between *Did* 11:8 and Matt 7:15–20,[32] it is probable that "the way of the Lord" refers to general ethical behaviour, as the context of the Sermon on the Mount indicates. Hence, it would be more natural to interpret the way of the Lord in 11:8 as the ethical teachings in the Two Ways section, which is given as the teaching of the Lord (1:1).

There is another problematic saying in *Did* 11:11, where the community is told not to judge a tested prophet for their actions "for the earthly mystery of the church" (εἰς μυστήριον κοσμικὸν ἐκκλησίας), as long as they do not teach others to do the same. Some scholars try to relate the saying to Eph 5:32: "This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church." They thus interpret it as referring to spiritual marriages between prophet and prophetess.[33] Draper suggests that by the social standard at that time, such spiritual marriages would be offensive to the public, and to the *Didache* community in particular.[34] However, such interpretation must at best be speculations.[35] The only thing certain is that some of the prophets act in ways that may invite judgment from others, as some of the ancient prophets did. This may include spiritual marriage, but not necessarily limited to it.[36] The *Didache* deems such behaviour acceptable for a true prophet, though not to be imitated by other believers.

These instructions concerning the authenticity of prophets may reflect two dangers to which the community need to respond. First, it reflects the existence of

[30] Rordorf and Tuilier, *La Doctrine*, 55, Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 179.
[31] Milavec, *Didache*, 460–63.
[32] Although the *Didache* sometimes has sayings in the Gospels put in a different context, the idea of testing the prophets by their behaviour has more similarity in thought in *Did* and Matt, rather than merely textual resemblance.
[33] Rordorf and Tuilier, *La Doctrine*, 187, Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 179–82.
[34] Draper, "Commentary," 247.
[35] Audet, *La Didachè*, 452.
[36] Milavec, *Didache*, 467–68.

pretenders who "come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." (Matt 7:15). Such pretenders with evil motives can cause destruction (*Did* 11:2), not only to individuals but also to the community as a whole, by bringing in undesirable behaviour into the society. Second, though less obviously, it may also reflect the existence of different teachings, the truth of which is not immediately discernible by the content of the teaching itself.[37] It may then cause confusion among community members, thus jeopardizing the solidarity of the group. This is especially the case when the prophets claim to be speaking in the Spirit, a situation that the *Didache* prohibit the community to judge. In case these "teachings in the Spirit" are in tension with the general norm of the community, the group norm that maintains the unity of the community will be in danger of being weakened. Some means have to be provided to check such danger, but at the same time maintaining the authority of the Spirit.

In conclusion, the instructions about apostles and prophets suggest that there were pressing problems for the community.[38] Admittedly, one has to be cautions in reconstructing the historical reality of itinerant charismatics from the limited evidence of the *Didache*, as Henderson correctly points out, but the regulations still reflect "a whole range of stresses in early Christianity."[39] It was necessary for the community to discern the authenticity of those who claim authority, in order to avoid the generosity of the community being abused and the community order being impaired by false teaching. If these threats are not guarded carefully, there could be serious damages for the cohesiveness of the group besides economic losses. Therefore the *Didache* provides detailed, even harsh instructions for the discernment of true authority, in order to protect the integrity of the community.

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[37] Milavec, "True and False Prophets," 124 comments that the author of the Didache acknowledge alternative traditions which cannot all be scorned as incompatible with "the tradition" he is defining. How to resolve the tension caused by these alternative teaching could be a problem the community has to deal with.

[38] So Audet, *La Didachè*, 443, Niederwimmer, "Itinerant Radicalism," 334, van de Huub and Flusser, *Didache*, 339, Milavec, "True and False Prophets," 124. If *Did* 11–15 is a late redaction layer, as usually suggested, then the instructions in these chapters would still be highly relevant when the final form of the *Didache* was produced. Moreover, it should be observed that the Apostolic Constitutions curtails *Did* 11–12, indicating that those instructions have lost much relevance for the situation of the church then.

[39] Henderson, "*Didache* and Orality," 293.

5.2.2 Receiving Other Christians (*Did* 12)

After discussing the apostles and prophets, the *Didache* turns to give instructions about "everyone who comes in the name of the Lord" (12:1). *Did* 12 is perhaps one of the least discussed chapter in the whole writing.[40] However, these instructions concerning "non-charismatic" Christians reflect no less struggle of the early Christian communities.

Did 12 instructs the community on how to receive both passing Christians (12:2) and those who want to settle (12:3–5), with 12:1 giving a general principle for both cases. The general principle is that all Christians arriving at the community is to be received and only after that they are to be tested for authenticity.[41] Besides the practical reason that time is needed for discerning the authenticity of the new-comer, the instruction also concerns the shaping of the community. It tries to uphold the generosity, which is a mark for the church, while cautioning the community to stay alert for swindlers. This indicates a tension between the self-understanding of the Christian community and the daily situation with which it needs to deal.

To those passers-by, the community is to help them as much as possible (ὅσον δύνασθε). Moreover, these travelers are not allowed to stay more than two or three days, a regulation similar to 11:5, but with a slightly looser standard. This contrast in the allowed duration of stay reflects the common phenomenon of requiring higher standard for leaders.

Next, the *Didache* introduces a new situation, that is, some Christians arriving at the community and seeking to settle within it. Three scenarios are discussed. First, if the settler is a craftsman (τεχνίτης), he is to earn himself a living by working with his own skill (12:3). Second, if he has no craft, the community is to provide a way for him so that he will not live in idleness (12:4). This probably refers to finding for the settler a job that he can handle, so that he can earn his living. Lastly, if the settler refuses to earn his own living, then he is considered as a "Christ-peddler"

[40] For example, Audet's commentary gives merely four pages on *Did* 12, and Milavec's thousand-page commentary has only a few occasional mentions of this chapter.
[41] The adverb ἔπειτα marks a sequence. See LSJ s.v. ἔπειτα.

(χριστέμπορος),[42] and the community is to be on guard against such people (προσέχετε ἀπὸ τῶν τοιούτων). This probably means the expulsion of the idler from the community.

It is not the purpose of this study to give a detailed discussion of the origin of these travelling Christians. However, it should be remarked that there is no evidence to relate them to the Jewish Wars or the Bar Kochba revolt, as Patterson suggests.[43] At the time of the early church, travelers usually need the support of friends or local communities on their journey. This is sufficient to account for their passing through the community. Moreover, those seeking to settle may be the result of local persecutions, like those described in Acts 8:1; 18:2. Hence, there is nothing to suggest an association with the Jewish Wars and revolts in Palestine in particular.

In conclusion, *Did* 12 again shows tensions experienced by the *Didache* community. The generosity displayed in receiving and supporting fellow Christians forms part of the self-understanding of the community, as also indicated in the exhortations in 1:5 and 4:7–8. However, some of the new arrivals may be swindlers that threaten the well-being of the community. Hence regulations are to be given to protect the community from being abused and its order being impaired. Relatively speaking, the danger caused by these "non-charismatic" Christians may not be as great as that caused by false-prophets. However, it is no less necessary for the community to guard against false members who do not meet the norm required for ensuring its harmony.

5.2.3 Settling Prophets (*Did* 13)

After giving instructions concerning Christians arriving at the community, the *Didache* once again turns its attention to prophets among the community. General principles (13:1–2) are followed by detailed instructions (13:3–7). In contrast to non-charismatic settlers, who are to earn their own living, the prophets who settle among the community, as well as the teachers, were supplied for their living by the

[42] The word χριστέμπορος is not attested before the *Didache*. It may be a neologism by the Didachist, which means someone who misuses the name of Christ for personal enrichment, and may be a wordplay with Χριστιανός in 12:4. See Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 187 and Adam, *Erwägungen*, 38.
[43] Patterson, "*Didache* 11–13," 326.

community, with the premise that they were true (ἀληθινός). While the prophets are described explicitly as "willing to settle" (θέλων καθῆσθαι), indicating their previous itinerancy, nothing is mentioned about the teachers' previous state.[44] *Did* 13:2 clearly indicates that they formed a group distinct from the prophets, but they were to be treated like the prophets.

The commands in *Did* 13, which have several features parallel with the commands of first-fruit offerings in the Old Testament, show clearly roots in Judaism, but at the same time they show deviations from the Jewish roots.[45] One striking feature to be noted is the recognition of the prophets as "your high priests" (οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς ὑμῶν). This shows that the community recognizes the authority of the religion leaders in the Old Testament cultic system, but transfers it freely to the new ecclesiastical situation.[46] It may parallel the reaction of Judaism that transferred the tithes originally for the priests to the rabbis after the destruction of the Jerusalem temple.[47] Therefore, it reflects a re-establishment of leadership under changed circumstances after a crisis.

The inclusion of money in the first-fruit offerings to the prophets (13:7) is in striking contrast with the regulations in *Did* 11, in which both apostles and prophets are forbidden to ask for money. It indicates that the command of offering first-fruit is more than merely providing the prophets' necessities of living. It has more to do with the distribution of the community's resources, as well as establishing the authority of the prophets and teachers among the community.[48] Moreover, *Did* 13:4 provides an

[44] It has been argued above that *Did* 11:1–2 does not describe a group of teachers parallel to the apostles and prophets. Hence Niederwimmer's argument that the teachers previously were itinerants is insufficient. See Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 190. On the other hand, there were indeed itinerant teachers in the early church. One example is Apollos in Acts 18:24–28. Hence the possibility that the teachers in *Did* 13:2 are settling itinerants cannot be ruled out.

[45] See van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 360–64, and Milavec, *Didache*, 494–98. Draper suggests that the commands in *Did* 13 include a layer originally given to regulate Gentile Christians' participation of Jewish offerings and another layer for adjusting the practice after the destruction of the temple in 70 CE. See Draper, "First-fruits," 237–41.

[46] Niederwimmer, quoting Harnack, observes further that such formulation has no direct parallels in early Christian literature. See Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 192.

[47] van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 361–62. See also Gedaliah Alon, *The Jews in their Land in the Talmudic Age, 70–640 CE*. (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1980), 1:257.

[48] Milavec, *Didache*, 500–505 further asserts that the commands are intended to teach the new converts to show gratitude to the Lord. While this aspect is not to be denied, the text concerns more on

alternative in case there is no prophets among the community. In that case, the first-fruit offering is to be given to the poor. This contingency plan shows that the offering of the first-fruit is a routine of the community, to be performed regardless the situation of the community. Hence Draper is not far off the mark when he asserts that *Did* 13 may reflect a crisis in the allocation of revenues.[49] The utmost concern is thus again the order and harmony of the community.

Unlike *Did* 11–12, the concern for abuses of the community's generosity is dropped in *Did* 13. Instead of guarding against swindlers from outside, the attention is shifted to establishing and maintaining order for the ingroup, a concern that would be carried on to *Did* 14–15. The status and authority of the residential prophets and teachers are established, and their living is provided for, so that the community could have a more stable leadership. These instructions also regulate the distribution of resources within the group. One can thus see the relevance of *Did* 13 to preventing conflicts, or resolving them in case conflicts have already arisen. Competition for resources and status inconsistency are two common origins of conflict.[50] Hence, clear instructions for the distribution of resources and articulation of the status of the leaders are necessary for maintaining the harmony of the community. Moreover, the commands on first-fruit offering also show a transition of the church from its Jewish roots. New practices have to be regulated as old practices of offering to the priests are no longer valid.

5.2.4 Pure Sacrifice and Reconciliation (*Did* 14)

Did 14:1 mentions "the Lord's (day) of the Lord" (κυριακὴν δὲ κυρίου). This seemingly redundant phrase has invited speculations on its meaning,[51] but probably

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the status of the prophets in the community and the provision for their living, in contrast to the ordinary Christians in 12:3–5.

[49] Draper, "Wandering Charismatics," 569–70. However, his explanation for the reason of this crisis remains inconclusive.

[50] Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 21, 24. Draper, "Pure Sacrifice," 227–28 also observes that "struggles over power and scarce material resources in the community, then, probably underlie the bulk of quarrels in the community of the Didache."

[51] For example, Dugmore suggests that the phrase refers only to Easter. See Clifford W. Dugmore, "Lord's Day and Easter," in *Neotestamentica et patristica*, ed. W. C. van Unnik et. al., NovTSup 6 (Leiden: Brill, 1962), 272–81. On the other hand, Tidwell claims that the phrase refers to *Yom Kippur*. See Neville L. A. Tidwell, "Didache XIV:1 (Κατὰ Κυριακὴν δὲ Κυρίου) Revisited," *VC* 53 (1999): 197–207.

is an emphasis on the Christian day of worship, in contrast to the Sabbath.[52] On that day, the community is to "break bread and give thanks" (κλάσατε ἄρτον καὶ εὐχαριστήσατε). These recalls the Eucharist in *Did* 9–10. [53] However, as Niederwimmer correctly observes, these commands only serve as an introduction to the central statement in 14:1b.[54] Hence, the focus is on confession of transgressions and reconciliation rather than on the Sunday worship as such.

Did 14:1 states that members of the community are to confess their transgressions in order that "your sacrifice may be pure" (καθαρὰ ἡ θυσία ὑμῶν ᾖ). In view of the exhortation in *Did* 14:2, which is obviously closely connected to 14:1 through the contrast between "your sacrifice may be pure" and "your sacrifice be profaned", the main transgression considered here would be disputes among community members.[55] Here the breaking of bread and thanksgiving are understood as sacrifices,[56] and quarrels among the community are regarded as defilement, so that "warring fellow Christians are to be excluded temporarily from the eucharistic celebration (14:2)."[57] This shows not only that the *Didache* supposes there would be disputes among community members, but also that such disputes are perceived as jeopardizing the community's identity as priests that offer pure sacrifices to God. Therefore, members in dispute must be reconciled before they can participate in the community's ritual.

The *Didache* then cites Mal 1:11, 14 in support of its exhortations. It may be noted that Mal 1:11 is linked to *Did* 14:1–2 through the catchwords "pure sacrifice" (θυσίαν καθαράν). This highlights again that the central concern of *Did* 14 is the

[52] See van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 350–51, and Michele Murray, *Playing a Jewish Game: Gentile Christian Judaizing in the First and Second Centuries CE.*, SCJ 13 (Waterloo: Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion, 2004), 65.
[53] For a discussion on the connection between the sacrifice in *Did* 14 and the Eucharist in *Did* 9–10, see Carsten Claussen, "The Eucharist in the Gospel of John and in the *Didache*," in *Trajectories through the New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers*, eds. Andrew Gregory and Christopher Tuckett (Oxford: OUP, 2005), 155–58.
[54] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 194.
[55] Contra Draper, "Pure Sacrifice," 229–31. Draper suggests that 14:1 concerns confession of transgressions against God, and 14:2 concerns settling of quarrels between members of the community.
[56] For a discussion on different interpretations of the sacrifice, see Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 196–97 and Arthur Vööbus, *Liturgical Traditions in the Didache*, PETSE 16 (Stockholm: ETSE, 1968), 107–8.
[57] van de Sandt, "Do Not Give," 243. This teaching of the *Didache* is similar to Matt 5:23–24, but the temple sacrifice in Matthew is re-contextualized as the Eucharist of the community.

purity of the community, understood in terms of clean conscience of the members, especially free from disputes.

5.2.5 Local Officials (*Did* 15:1–2)

In 15:1–2, the *Didache* returns to the issue of community leaders. It concerns the selection or appointment[58] of bishops and deacons (ἐπισκόπους καὶ διακόνους). These officials have to be "worthy of the Lord" (ἀξίους τοῦ κυρίου), meaning that they should be men of gentle temper, not money loving, truthful and proved (ἄνδρας πραεῖς καὶ ἀφιλαργύρους καὶ ἀληθεῖς καὶ δεδοκιμασμένους). The list bears some resemblances to requirements for church leaders in 1 Tim 3, Ti 1, and 1 Pet 5. Hence these are probably common qualifications of leaders in the early church.

Since the combination of bishop (ἐπισκόπος) and deacon (διακόνος) appears already in Phil 1:1, it is possible that these were already existing positions in the *Didache* community.[59] The functions of bishops and deacons for the community are comparable to those of prophets and teachers (15:1). However, instead of specifying their functions, the comparison to prophets and teachers serves two other purposes in the context. First, it motivates the preceding list of qualities required of the bishops and deacons.[60] From the instructions in *Did* 13, it is obvious that prophets and teachers were held in high esteem by the community. By comparing the local officials with them, the importance of the local officials will be highlighted, and hence the importance of their having suitable quality will be stressed. Second, putting the bishops and deacons at the same level as the prophets and teachers implies that they have the same honour (15:2). The community is thus commanded not to disregard (ὑπερορά́ω) the bishops and deacons.

[58] Niederwimmer maintains that χειροτονέω here means "choose" or "elect", not "appoint". On the contrary, Milavec opts for the meaning "appoint". See Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 200 and Milavec, *Didache*, 583–84. However, for the purpose of this study, it is not necessary to decide on the precise meaning of the verb here.

[59] See van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 337 and Stewart-Sykes, "Prophecy and Patronage," 182. Contra Rordorf and Tuilier, *La Doctrine*, 64 and André Tuilier, "Les chaismatiques itinérants dans la Didachè et dans l'Évangile de Matthieu," in *Matthew and the Didache*, ed. Huub van de Sandt (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 157–69, who regard *Did* 15 as introducing new offices of bishops and deacons to replace the prophets and teachers.

[60] Flusser and van de Sandt, *Didache*, 337.

These admonitions in *Did* 15:2 may reflect a tension between local officials and incoming charismatics.[61] When different figures of authority exist simultaneously within a community, competition over power can easily occur, which may lead to conflict, especially when there is power imbalance.[62] Though exhortations to regard community leaders are common,[63] the negative expression "do not disregard" in *Did* 15:2 suggests that this may not be merely an ordinary reminder, but a response to actual problems. The problem may have arisen from unworthy occupants of the positions of bishops and deacons.[64] This possibility also explains the emphasis on the qualities of these officials in 15:1. On the other hand, de Halleux suggests that "[e]ven excellent pastors, the bishops and deacons, can be despised because they are non-charismatic,"[65] or, to borrow Jesus' words, "a prophet is not without honour except in his hometown and in his own household." (Matt 13:57). It is possible that the Didachist either knew of such situation among the communities, or foresaw potential conflicts arising.

When the local officials are not given due regard, several consequences could follow. First, this could affect their ability to exercise their responsibilities and leadership in the community, since not enough power are designated to them.[66] Second, a continuous state of low power could lead to corrupting effects, thus further lowering the quality of these leaders.[67] Third, conflict among leaders could escalate to the whole community through polarization.[68] In view of these possible consequences, it is natural that the *Didahce* should take measures to prevent such conflicts from happening, and to resolve it in case conflicts already exist.

[61] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 200–202.
[62] Wilmot and Hocker, *Interpersonal Conflict*, 115–16.
[63] *Did* 4:1 is an example in the *Didache*. Some New Testament examples include 1 Thess 5:12–13 and Heb 5:17.
[64] Schöllgen, "Church Order," 60–62.
[65] de Halleux, "Ministers," 314.
[66] It is observed that both lack of power and excessive power lead to ineffective communication behaviours. This can seriously affect a leader exercising his or her duty. See Wilmot and Hocker, *Interpersonal Conflict*, 118–19.
[67] Wilmot and Hocker, *Interpersonal Conflict*, 116.
[68] Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 118–19.

5.2.6 Mutual Correction and Community Duties (*Did* 15:3–4)

Did 15:3 exhorts community members to correct each other. Thematically, it is a natural continuation of *Did* 14, which commands confession and reconciliation. Therefore, 15:1–2 is sometimes regarded as a digression.[69] However, upon a comparison with the *Community Rule* at Qumran, van de Sandt observes that the themes within *Did* 14-15 appear in the same sequence as in 1QS 5:10b–25. He thus claims that the arrangement of *Did* 14–15 may reflect a tradition in which inspection of quality of the members led to the topic of reproof of offending members in general.[70] Moreover, *Did* 15:3 can be seen as a suitable comment following *Did* 14:1–15:2. After mentioning different aspects of community relations including members in dispute with his fellow (14:1–3), necessary qualities for the leading roles (15:1), and member's regard for the leaders (15:2), it would be apt to conclude with a general comment on mutual correction. Hence, one may discern a coherence of thought in *Did* 14–15, instead of attributing its present form to interpolations or digressions.

The exhortations in 15:3 concern not only the duty of community members to correct one another, but also the manner of doing so. They are to correct one another "not in anger but in peace" (μὴ ἐν ὀργῇ ἀλλ' ἐν εἰρήνῃ). This remark, while attributed to the authority of the gospel,[71] also shows an awareness of common human responses in situations of conflict. Studies in conflict have pointed out that conflict is constituted by moves and countermoves during interaction.[72] Offensive behaviours of one party would trigger emotion-laden reactions in the counterpart, which will then feedback and produce more severe reactions, thus forming an escalatory spiral.[73] These common human experiences make it a pressing need for the *Didache* to warn against anger in the community's mutual corrections.

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[69] So Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 203, Rudolf Knopf, *Die Lehre der zwölf Apostel. Die zwei Clemensbriefe*, HNT.E 1 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1920), 38, Paul Drews, "Apostellehre (Didache)," in *Handbuch zu den neutestametlichen Apokryphen*, ed. Edgar Hennecke (Tübingen: Mohr, 1904), 280–81.
[70] van de Sandt, "Two Windows," 188–89.
[71] The closest parallel of this teaching in the Gospels would be Matt 5:22–26; 18:15–17, though the details in the Matthew passages are lacking in the *Didache*. See Kraft, *Banabas and the Didache*, 175.
[72] Folger et. al., *Working through Conflict*, 24–27.
[73] Wilmot and Hocker, *Interpersonal Conflict*, 21–23.

The aim of mutual correction is the repentance of the members at fault. Nevertheless, it is possible a member refuses to repent. Hence, instructions are provided for such cases. The community is not to speak to the unrepentant person, and not to let him hear from them, until that person repents. The inclusion of this instruction in the *Didache* indicates that the community would probably encounter some unrepentant members from time to time.

The command for mutual correction is followed by another general exhortation for the community in 15:4. Audet observes that 15:3 and 15:4 both concerns more common incidence than other instructions in this part of the *Didache*, and both verses refer to the gospel.[74] Hence, 15:4 may be more closely connected to its immediate context than it might appear at first sight. It reminds the community that the regulations on community order, not only those in 14:1–15:3, but also the whole section starting from *Did* 11, are aimed at allowing the community to perform its duties, including prayers and almsgiving, as taught by the Lord. Hence, 15:4 is an appropriate conclusion of the whole section on community order. Furthermore, the mention of prayer, which is a main focus in *Did* 8–10, also serves as a link to the previous section.

5.2.7 Concluding Summary

The church order in *Did* 11–15 reflects two aspects of concern for the community. The first is the necessity to discern the authenticity of those arriving at the community. The community has to guard against its generosity being exploited, while not denying its responsibility to support fellow Christians and leaders (*Did* 11–12). The second aspect concerns harmony of the group. Those tested leaders are to be treated appropriately (*Did* 13; 15:1–2), and grudges between community members have to be prevented, or resolved as best as possible in case dispute has already arisen (*Did* 14; 15:3). Solidarity and order of the community have to be maintained

[74] Audet, *La Didachè*, 467. The mention of prayers and almsgiving may remind one of the teaching in Matt 6. Hence, some claims that the Gospel teaching referred to in *Did* 15:4 is indeed that passage in Matthew. See Wengst, *Didache*, 26 and Edouard Massaux, *The Influence of the Gospel of Saint Matthew on Christian Literature before Saint Irenaeus*, NGS 5.1–3 (Louvain: Peeters; Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1990–93) 3:157. However, the lack of details from Matt 6 in the brief saying in *Did* 15:4 makes it doubtful whether the *Didache* is referring specifically to Matt 6 at this point. See Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 205.

so that the community can perform its responsibilities properly (15:4). The whole section forms a coherent unit, aiming at avoiding incidences that endanger the cohesiveness of the community.

From the regulations in this church order, one may discern some of the tensions within the *Didache* community. On the one hand, the precision of the instructions concerning incoming charismatics, as well as ordinary Christians, indicates that the community was experiencing problems on issues concerning incomers. On the other hand, the instructions on confession, reconciliation, and mutual correction reveal an awareness of possible ingroup conflicts common to most communities. Such scenarios were likely to happen in the *Didache* community from time to time. Hence, regulations have to be given so that the community would know what to do in such cases.

5.3 Community Rituals (*Did* 7–10)

Did 7–10 gives instructions on several rituals, including baptism (*Did* 7), fasting, prayers (*Did* 8), and Eucharist/meal ritual (*Did* 9–10). As Schöllgen observes, the instructions in these chapters do not provide a comprehensive teaching on the rituals. Rather, they are selective and sometimes concern only secondary issues.[75] This selective nature suggests that these instructions were given in response to actual problems of the community.

Before looking at the details of the instructions, two general remarks should be made. First, the rituals mentioned have deep Jewish roots.[76] Moreover, the *Didache* gives very little explanation for these practices, only stating how the community is to perform them. Therefore, it is likely that these instructions are not introducing new practices. Instead, they aim at regulating those existing practices of the community.[77] By giving these regulations, the *Didache* may serve to transmit and unify these rituals among the early church. Second, liturgical experiences inform the understanding of moral teachings (*Did* 1–6) and the instructions on church order (*Did*

[75] Schöllgen, "Church Order," 46–51.
[76] van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 271–329.
[77] Wengst, *Didache*, 23.

11–15).[78] Instructions of rituals not only regulate the practices itself, but could affect a community's worldview, identity, and attitudes. In particular, it is observed that Christological elements are more prominent in *Did* 7–10 than in the preceding Two Ways section.[79] This suggests that the ritual section could reveal more about the self-understanding of the early Christians as distinct to other groups, especially other Jewish groups.

5.3.1 Baptism (*Did* 7)

Did 7 gives instructions on baptism. Several issues concerning the baptismal rite are dealt with in this brief instruction. First of all, a pre-baptismal instruction is mentioned (7:1a). In the present form of the *Didache*, it is apparent that "having said all these beforehand" (ταῦτα πάντα προειπόντες) refers to the Two Ways instructions in *Did* 1–6. However, it is not clear that the Two Ways in *Did* 1–6 were meant to be recited verbatim before the rite of baptism.[80] As van de Sandt and Flusser cautions, the later lines of demarcation between catechetical instruction and liturgical celebration were not drawn so sharply in the first century.[81] The instruction also includes a "baptismal formula" (7:1b, 3).[82] The Trinitarian formula is usually regarded as an later development from an earlier practice of baptizing "in the name of the Lord" (*Did* 9:5).[83] However, it should be noted that the context of *Did* 9:5 is not about baptism as such, but concerns the criterion for participating in the Eucharist. Therefore it is not necessary to assume that *Did* 9:5 preserves the actual formula used in baptism. It is possible that "in the name of the Lord" is meant to be a shorthand of the actual formula as recorded in *Did* 7. The repetition of the Trinitarian formula in *Did* 7 indicates that when the final form of the *Didache* was produced, the formula was already integral to the baptismal rite.[84] Nothing polemical concerning the

[78] Lange, "Liturgy Redefining Life," 207–8.
[79] Jonathan Reed, "The Hebrew Epic and the *Didache*," in *The* Didache *in Context*, ed. Clayton N. Jefford (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 219.
[80] Adolf von Harnack, *Die Apostellehre und die jüdischen beiden Wege* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1886), 2, Anton Greiff, *Das älteste Pascharituale der Kirche, Did 1–10, und das Johannesevangelium*, JS 1 (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1929), 121–26.
[81] van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 280–81.
[82] It is questioned whether this Trinitarian formula is used ritually or rather expresses a theological reflection on baptism. See Stewart-Sykes, "Paraenesis and Baptism," 350–51.
[83] van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 284, Rordorf, "Baptism," 217.
[84] Although the formula in *Did* 7:3 lacks the articles in *Did* 7:1, the two formulas should still be regarded as essentially the same. Matt 28:19 also shows that the Trinitarian formula is used in baptism.

baptismal formula is evident in *Did* 7, neither is there any elaboration on the theology of baptism, although such a Trinitarian formula certainly distinguishes the Christian baptism from its Jewish counterpart.[85] The text simply stresses a common practice of the early church, which is presented as the proper way to perform baptism.

Much more attention is paid to the type of baptismal water to be used. *Did* 7:1 shows that living water (ὕδατι ζῶντι), meaning spring or river water, is to be used by default. The preference of living water for liturgical uses was common in Jewish as well as Greco-Roman practices.[86] However, concessions are then given in 7:2–3 for situations when the preferred types of water are not available. Such regulations are paralleled in Jewish halakhic debates on ritual washings as seen in the Mishnah.[87] These concessions clearly indicate that there were concerns for communities that, owing to their geographical locations and/or seasonal and climatic factors, had difficulty in performing baptism with the most preferable type of water.

From a social-scientific perspective, the concern for baptismal water in the *Didache* may not only be a practical problem, but could have important implications for the stability of the Christian community. Since the rite of baptism, besides a rite of initiation, was likely to be considered to have actual cleansing effect for the participants, its effectiveness is an essential issue that could affect the integration of the participant into the community. If the baptism performed in some of the communities are considered by other as ineffective, the solidarity of the whole church is endangered.[88] In order to resolve such tensions, the *Didache* legitimizes the baptism performed by those communities that have no access to the best type of

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Flusser and van de Sandt suggest that the formula may be attracted by the practice of immersing three times in the Jewish tradition. See van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 286–91. However, such a suggestion does not seem to justify the heavy theological implications of the formula.

[85] Hartman suggests that the Trinitarian formula reflects a debate with Jews on the identity and role of Jesus and the Spirit. See Lars Hartman, *Into the Name of the Lord Jesus: Baptism in the Early Church* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 151.

[86] van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 281. See also a more detailed discussion in Theodor Klauser, "Taufet in lebendigem Wasser! Zum religions- und kulturgeschichtlichen Verständnis von Didache 7,1/3," in *Gesammelte Arbeiten zur Liturgiegeschichte, Kirchengeschichte und christlichen Archäologie*, ed. E. Dassmann, JAC.E 3 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1974), 177–83.

[87] van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 281–83. In particular, mMikw 1:1–8 contains a list of different kinds of waters similar to *Did* 7:2–3.

[88] This corresponds to the situation of lack of normative consensus, which is a source of conflict. See Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 26–27.

water. At the same time, the solemnity of the baptismal rite is upheld by classifying the types of waters into ranks, so that communities still have to seek for the best possible kind of baptismal water.

The last instruction about baptism in *Did* 7 concerns pre-baptismal fasting (7:4). The instruction specifies the people to be included and the duration of the fast. Several characteristics of this instruction may be noted. First, in addition to transmitting the practice of the ritual, the instructions on the pre-baptismal fasting in the *Didache* may also serve the function of unifying the practice of this ritual in different local communities. This could be a precaution against disputes, and a means to regulate the situation in case disputes have already occurred. Especially in that period of the early church when the church institutes were still in the process of formation, this possibility of dispute over the performance of rituals should not be ignored. Second, besides the baptizer and the baptized, "others who are able" (τινες ἄλλοι δύνανται) are also called to participate in the fast. From this one sees that the cohesiveness of the community is a concern. The occasion of this fundamental ritual is utilized to enhance the solidarity of the community. Third, it is possible that the one or two days' period of fast can serve to produce in a Gentile convert a sense of separation from the pagan world, since fasting involves repentance and remissions of sins,[89] and may in addition signify a cleansing from food sacrificed to idols.[90] This indicates a tension between the self-identification of the community with the surrounding society. Fourth, van de Sandt observes that fasting one or two days before the baptism, which is to be held on Sundays, would entail a violation of the Sabbath, in which fasting is not allowed.[91] He thus concludes that the *Didache* community has at least partially dropped the observance of the Jewish Sabbath. If that is the case, the instruction in *Did* 7:4 may reflect a separation of the *Didache* community form its Jewish roots.

In summary, *Did* 7 deals with those details of the baptismal rite which could possibly become problematic due to various situations of local Christian

[89] van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 280.
[90] Milavec, *Didache*, 255.
[91] van de Sandt, "Redefining Jewish Identity," 263.

communities. Differences in the practice of baptism, a rite which was of fundamental importance to the early church, could potentially cause tension among Christian communities. Through regulating these practices, the *Didache* serves to unify the practice of baptism among its communities, and hence enhancing their cohesiveness. Moreover, several elements of the instruction, such as the Trinitarian formula and the pre-baptismal fasting, reflect a separation of the Christian community from its Jewish roots. This makes it more important to reshape the Christian identity against the Jewish background.

5.3.2 Fasting and Prayers (*Did* 8)

After the instructions on baptism, the *Didache* turns to give instructions on two other rituals that were to be regularly performed by the early Christians, namely, the bi-weekly fasting and praying three times a day. It is possible that these instructions are placed after the instructions on baptism owing to the catchword "fast" (νηστεύω),[92] without a strong logical reason for this sequence. Draper goes so far as to suggest that *Did* 8 is a "sudden intrusion of material" that "reflects the emergence of new social tensions and exigencies."[93] However, it would not be unnatural to deal with the rituals of fasting and prayer in a section that concerns several other community rituals. Moreover, the polemic against rival groups (the "hypocrites") explicit in *Did* 8 is also implicit in other chapters of *Did* 7–10.[94] Hence, the teachings in *Did* 8 indeed fit well with its context in the *Didache*.

The most striking feature of *Did* 8 is the twice references to the "hypocrites" (ὑποκριτής). The use of such harsh language indicates the existence of an rival group, which obviously is of Jewish background, though the precise identity of this group is debated.[95] It seems clear that by separating from the "hypocrites", the *Didache* is

[92] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 131 suggests that *Did* 8 is an excursus added to the traditional material of community rituals, which proceeds from baptism to the celebration of Eucharist.
[93] Draper, "Christian Self-Definition," 230.
[94] See sections 5.3.1 above and 5.3.3 below. This is contrary to Tomson's comment that indications of a conflict with the Jews, or Pharisees, are absent except in *Did* 8. See Peter J. Tomson, "Transformations of Post-70 Judaism," in *Matthew, James, and Didache*, eds. Huub van de Sandt and Jürgen K. Zangenberg, (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 118.
[95] A common opinion is that the hypocrites refer to the Pharisees. See Jonathan A. Draper, "The Apostolic Fathers: The Didache," *ExpT* 117(2006): 180, Tomson, "Halakhic Evidence," 131–41, Kraft, *Barnabas and the Didache*, 163, Audet, *La Didachè*, 368, Knopf, *Lehre*, 23, Anders Ekenberg,

guarding against some sort of adherence with Judaism. Fasting and Prayer were two common practices of Jews. The *Didache* does not reject these practices as such, but it commands alternative ways to perform these rituals. This serves to create a differentiation between the *Didache* community and the rival group. The need for such differentiation highlights the tension between the two groups.

In contrast to the polemic against Pharisees in Matt 6, the instruction on fasting in *Did* 8 does not concern secrecy of the action or the motive of fasting. Instead, it focuses only on the days of fasting. Bradshaw suggests that the choice of Monday and Thursday as fasting days by the Jews is related to these being market days in Palestine.[96] On the other hand, the choice for Wednesday and Friday as alternatives has not found satisfactory explanations.[97] Besides some practical considerations, such as not to fast on two consecutive days, it is probable that these days were picked with the sole purpose of distinguishing the Christian communities from the Jews.

Concerning the practices of prayer, the *Didache* advices Christians to pray the prayer "as the Lord commanded in his Gospel" (ὡς ἐκέλευσεν ὁ κύριος ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ αὐτοῦ) three times a day (8:2–3). The prayer in *Did* 8:2 is almost identical to the Lord's prayer in Matthew, with only slight variations. It seems that the Didachist at least knew the Lord's prayer attested in Matthew, even if the textual

"Evidence for Jewish Believers in 'Church Orders' and Liturgical Texts," in *Jewish Believers in Jesus: The Early Centuries*, eds. Oskar Skarsaunne and Reidar Hvalvik (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2007), 643–44. Slee, *Church in Antioch*, 92 regards them as Pharisaic Christians. Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 131–32 sees them as pious Israelites. Van de Sandt, "Redefining Jewish Identity," 261 suggests Jews in general. Milavec, *Didache*, 304–6 suggests that they are promoters of Temple piety.

[96] Paul F. Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer in the Early Church: A Study of the Origin and Early Development of the Divine Office*, ACC 63 (London: SPCK, 1981), 19. See also Zangenberg, "Milieu," 56–57.

[97] Knopf attempted to show that Tuesday or Wednesday and Friday were the only possible alternatives to the Jewish fast days. See Knopf, *Lehre*, 23. However, the precise choice of the days in the *Didache* is still not accounted for. On the other hand, Del Verme suggests that the choice of days is related to the debate about the calendar among Jewish groups. He thus asserts that the *Didache* represents the view of a Christian group of Essene/Enochic origin, as opposed to the other (Christian) group of Pharisaic origin. See Del Verme, *Didache and Judaism*, 176–86. See also Tomson, "Halakhic Evidence," 135–37, Annie Jaubert, "Jésus et le calendrier de Qumrân," *NTS* 7 (1960–61): 27–28, Annie Jaubert, *La date de La Cène. Calendrier biblique et liturgie Chrétienne*, Ebib (Paris: Gabalda, 1957), 13–75, and Josef Blinzler, "Qumran-Kalender und Passionschronologie," *ZNW* 49 (1958): 243–44. However, as Niederwimmer comments, it is highly improbable that calendar debates are the reason for the choice of the fasting days in the *Didache*. See Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 133 n16.

agreement may be attributed to a common liturgical tradition.[98] Praying three times a day was a well established Jewish practice,[99] and the *Didache* has no objection to it. However, the *Didache* proposes an alternative prayer for the Christians in substitution for that used by the Jews.[100] In the *Didache*, unlike in Matthew, the motive and attitude of the prayers are not mentioned. Only the content of the prayer is concerned in the instruction. Indeed, there are debates about contents of regular prayers among rabbis, as witnessed in the Mishnah.[101] In this regard, the *Didache* may be considered as one of the voices among such debates. However, designating the opponents as "hypocrites" again shows that the *Didache* community was in tension with other Jewish communities, and some kind of separation was already in progress.[102] Reciting a different prayer, like fasting on different days, marks the *Didache* community as a distinct group from its Jewish opponent.

The polemic in *Did* 8 presumes "an ongoing, close contact between the communities reflected here and their Jewish environment."[103] However, it would be an overstatement to assert that *Did* 8 reflects a solely "inner Jewish debate."[104] Rather, the instructions show that the *Didache* community was at least "in the process of separating themselves from the religious communion of Israel."[105] By altering the practices of fasting and prayers, and by vilifying the opponent as hypocrites, the *Didache* seeks to define the Christian community as a new group distinct from the rival group. It is possible, as Murray suggests, that "some Christian Gentiles had maintained Jewish rites from the very beginning of their Christian

[98] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 135–36, van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 294–95 and Draper, "Christian Self-Definition," 237 are among those who argue against *Did* 8:2 directly quoting Matthew.
[99] Tomson, "Halakhic Evidence," 138, van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 294.
[100] Some commentators suggest that the prayer of the hypocrites alluded to in *Did* 8:2 is the Jewish *tefilla* or the eighteen benedictions. See van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 294, Milavec, *Didache*, 343–45.
[101] Tomson, "Halakhic Evidence," 138–39.
[102] van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 295–96. See also Huub van de Sandt, "Was the Didache Community a Group within Judaism? An Assessment on the Basis of Its Eucharistic Prayers," in *A Holy People: Jewish and Christian Perspectives on Religious Communal Identity*, eds. Marcel Poorthuis et. al., JCPS 12 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 85–107.
[103] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 132.
[104] Draper, "Irrevocable Parting of the Ways," 230. See also Finlan's comments on Draper's view in Stephen Finlan, "Identity in the Didache Community," in *The Didache: A Missing Piece of the Puzzle in Early Christianity*, eds. J.A. Draper and C.N. Jefford, ECIL 14 (Atlanta: SBL, 2015), 17–32.
[105] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 132. See also van de Sandt, "Redefining Jewish Identity," 264 and Stephen G. Wilson, *Related Strangers: Jews and Christians 70–170 CE* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 224–35.

experience, without viewing such behaviour as contradictory to their belief in Jesus or their identity as Christians."[106] However, as the rift between Christians and Jews widened, a sharper distinction between Jewish and Christian identities is needed.

5.3.3 Eucharist (*Did* 9–10)

Did 9–10 gives instructions on the community's thanksgiving (εὐχαριστία). Prayer over the cup (9:2) and prayer over the bread (9:3–4) are followed by a thanksgiving after the meal (10:1–6). There are debates on the precise nature of the occasion described in these two chapters.[107] However, it is obvious that the meal is sacramental as well as a real meal.[108] The prescribed prayers and the restriction of the participants only to the baptized clearly indicate the ritual nature of the meal.

Several characteristics of the instructions in *Did* 9–10 should be noted. First, words of the prayers for different parts of the ritual are given in detail. The purpose is probably to prescribe a fixed pattern of prayers,[109] although some parts of the prayer may be variable.[110] It is possible that the community is required to follow these regulations in order to make the ritual properly "work" or obtain its objective.[111] It may also reflect the existence of some local communities using formulas that the Didachist considered to be insufficient, thus constituting an abuse of the ritual.[112] In that case, the regulations in *Did* 9–10 would serve to unify and legitimize the ritual

[106] Murray, *Playing a Jewish Game*, 65.
[107] Audet, *La Didachè*, 372–98, for example, argued on the basis of the absence of the words of institution and references to the death of Jesus that the ritual here is not the Eucharist. However, Vööbus, *Liturgical Traditions*, 68–101 forcefully asserts that there is no sufficient reason to deny the ritual nature of the meal. See also Dietrich-Alex Koch, "Eucharistic Meal and Eucharistic Prayers in *Didache* 9 and 10," *ST* 64 (2010): 200–210. Moreover, Enrico Mazza, "*Didache* 9–10: Elements of a Eucharistic Interpretation," in *The* Didache *in Modern Research*, ed. Jonathan A. Draper, 276–99 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 285–87 and Gerard Rouwhorst, "Table Community in Early Christianity," in *A Holy People*, eds. Marcel Poorthuis et. al. (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 72–73 caution that that the distinction between *agape* and Eucharist is a late development. Hence such a distinction should not be imposed on the interpretation of the *Didache*.
[108] Valeriy A. Alikin, *The Earliest History of the Christian Gathering: Origin, Development and Content of the Christian Gathering in the First to Third Centuries*, VCSup 102 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 108–9. See also the discussion in Claussen, "Eucharist," 141–44.
[109] Schöllgen, "Church Order," 50.
[110] Jonathan Schwiebert, *Knowledge and the Coming Kingdom: The Didache's Meal Ritual and its Place in Early Christianity*, LNTS 373 (New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 88.
[111] Ibid., 78.
[112] Schöllgen, "Church Order," 50. See also Paul Drews, "Untersuchungen zur Didache," *ZNW* 5 (1904): 74.

among various Christian communities, so that the cohesiveness of the church would not be weakened by controversies about the effectiveness of the rituals.

Second, it is clear that Jewish roots lie behind these prayers.[113] However, the prayers in the *Didache* are significantly deviated from their Jewish roots. One significant deviation is the spiritualization of God's gifts.[114] The focus of the ritual is not on the material food and drink, but the spiritual food and drink, that is, the life and knowledge signified by the ritual elements. Earthly abundance is replaced by spiritual and eschatological blessings, which only the Christian community is to obtain from God. Moreover, the role of Jesus in God's bestowing the blessings is emphasized. The gifts from God are "made known to us through Jesus your servant" (9:2, 3; 10:2). This further distinguishes the Christian community from other Jewish communities. Similarly, the eschatological hope of the Israel is transferred to the church. It is the church that God will gather into his kingdom (9:4; 10:5), preserve from all evil and make perfect in his love (10:5). Hence *Did* 9–10 clearly shows a "shift from Israel to the church, from the temple to the community."[115] It shows a "Gentile-oriented refashioning" that represents "a discontinuity in the people-of-God concept," and hence indicates "a community which has lost this sense of group identity within a Jewish matrix."[116] While the Jewish influence is still prominent, the traditions are sufficiently transformed to show the distinctiveness of the church. It witnesses the rift between Christians and non-Christian Jews, as they are rival claimers of God's promises.

Third, the Eucharist ritual also places a sharp distinction between insiders and outsiders. In *Did* 10:5, those who have not been baptized are prohibited from taking part in the Eucharist.[117] The prohibition is supported by the Lord's word, "do not

[113] van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 310–25 suggests that the prayers in *Did* 9–10 may have their roots in the Jewish *Birkat Ha-Mazon*. Milavec, *Didache*, 416–21 raises some objections to this suggestion. Claussen, "Eucharist," 151–55 also highlights the particularly Christian terminologies in the *Did* 9–10. Nevertheless, even if *Did* 9–10 does not depend directly on *Birkat Ha-Mazon*, it is still clear that these thanksgiving prayers stem from Jewish roots. See Schwiebert, *Knowledge*, 114–21.
[114] van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 318.
[115] Reed, "Hebrew Epic," 221.
[116] van de Sandt, "Redefining Jewish Identity," 258.
[117] The exhortations in 10:6, "if anyone if holy, let him come; if anyone is not, let him repent" is ritual conclusion, as suggested by the saying μαρὰν ἀθά ἀμήν at the end of 10:6. Hence it is not invitation

give to dogs what is holy." What is holy here is not only the community meal, but also the sacramental celebration.[118] It reflects an awareness of the danger of abusing the ritual. This danger has two aspects. First, it concerns the effectiveness of the ritual, since purity is an essential requirement for the performance of sacraments. Second, there is the danger of mixing up the Christian and Jewish understandings of God's promise, since the Jewish character of the ritual is still prominent. By restricting the Eucharist to those already baptized, who have been taught and have confessed the essential teachings of the church, the *Didache* ensures that all participants in the ritual would correctly understand its significance, especially the distinct identity of the church as signified in the prayers. The restriction on the participants of the Eucharist indicates a strong need to guard this important community ritual from being polluted.

Finally, there is a concern for the roles of prophets in the Eucharist. in *Did* 10:7, an allowance is given for the prophets to "give thanks as much as they desire" (εὐχαριστεῖν ὅσα θέλουσιν). This switches the focus to the organization of the community itself, and serves as a connection to *Did* 11–15. The meaning of this command is debated. It may grant the right for the prophets to add their own prayers *after* the preceding rituals, or allows the prophets to formulate the meal prayers without being limited by the given paradigms.[119] It may also mean that the prophets could hold Eucharist as often as they like.[120] Contrarily, Milavec regards the main purpose of the verse as restricting the roles of the prophets in the Eucharist instead of granting them authority.[121] In his view, the mention of prophets in 10:7 may reflect the tension between prophets and local officials in 15:1–2. However, there is no evidence in *Did* 9–10 that there are problems about who is going to preside over the Eucharist. Hence, Milavec's interpretation seems far-fetched. It is more likely that the concern of the regulation is on the order of the whole Eucharist ritual. In one

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and prohibition as such, much less an introduction to another stage of the ritual. Contra Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 161. Schwiebert further suggests that "let him come" does not refer to the Eucharist, but to entering the kingdom of God. For a summary of interpretations on *Did* 10:6, see Schwiebert, *Knowledge*, 72–78.

[118] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 154.

[119] Ibid., 164. Niederwimmer finds the second option more probable.

[120] Kraft, *Barnabas and the Didache*, 168.

[121] Milavec, "True and False Prophets," 121–22.

aspect, the allowance given to the prophets is similar to the concession of baptismal water in 7:2–3. Both instructions allow certain extent of freedom within the boundary of acceptable behaviours, so that the community could adapt to various situations without stepping outside the bound of acceptability.

In summary, the meal ritual does not only provide an opportunity for the community to gather and share, it also expresses the faith and hope of the community, and serves to draw both extramural and intramural boundaries.[122] In *Did* 9–10, one sees an attempt to regulate the Eucharist by prescribing proper procedures and prayers for the ritual. It reflects an effort to avoid controversies, which would possibly arise if there were significant differences in the understanding or performance of the ritual.[123] The prescribed prayers and the restriction on participants also help to distinguish the Christians from other Jewish communities. The need to do so reflects an increasing rift between the church and non-Christian Jews, which prompts the church to define its identity more clearly. On the other hand, the freedom given to prophets shows an awareness of the danger of imposing too strict rules. Due respect is given to the authoritative figures in the community. This can be seen as an attempt to avoid power clash within the community.

5.3.4 Concluding Summary

Social scientists suggest that the rituals of a community could have important roles for creating and maintaining the solidarity of that community. Generally speaking, rituals can serve to symbolize the community's goals and values, and hence provide expressions for that community's identity and self-understanding.[124] Rituals also transmit culture, and exercise constrains on social behaviour.[125] In the *Didache*, one sees that the instructions on community rituals serve to construct and consolidate the identity of community members. The baptism symbolize their

[122] John W. Riggs, "The Sacred Food of *Didache* 9–10 and Second-Century Ecclesiologies," in *The* Didache *in Context*, , ed. Clayton N. Jefford (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 262–83.
[123] McGowan, for example, observes that diversity in ancient Christian meal practice reflects controversies in that milieu. See Andrew McGowan, "Rethinking Eucharistic Origins," *Pacifica* 23 (2010): 177. See also Paul F. Bradshaw, *Eucharistic Origins* (London: SPCK, 2004), 43–60.
[124] Lawrence A. Hoffman, "Reconstructing Ritual as Identity and Culture," in *The Making of Jewish and Christian Worship*, eds. Paul F. Bradshaw and Lawrence A. Hoffman, TLT 1 (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1991), 22–41.
[125] Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 42.

incorporation into the group. The fasting, prayers, and Eucharistic meals provide external expressions for the group's particular identity as distinct from other groups, and remind members of their future hopes.

However, in real life situations, inconsistency in ritual practices are bound to occur. Therefore, rituals can be both a source of unity and a cause of conflict.[126] Hence, the practice of rituals in the community has to be regulated. This is one of the possible purposes of *Did* 7–10. Instructions on several important rituals of the early church, including baptism, fasting, prayer and Eucharist are given, so that local communities can keep in line with the authoritative teaching.[127] Behind these instructions is a concern for the unity and cohesiveness of the church.

The ritual instructions in the *Didache* is governed by the principal of purity, which is also a core concept connecting the whole document.[128] In *Did* 7–10, potential dangers can be seen in discrepancies in the understanding and performance of rituals, the presence of outsiders in the Eucharist, and the blurring of group boundaries by following rival communities' ritual practices. Therefore, the ritual section of the *Didache* is not merely a transmission of ritual traditions, but also an effort to avoid these dangers and to maintain the harmony of the community.

5.4 The Two Ways (*Did* 1–6)

Since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Two Ways section of *Did* 1–6 is recognized as stemming from Jewish traditions. However, the *Didache* does not just reproduce these traditions, but shows signs of redactions, which indicate that the traditional materials were adopted and adapted to be applied to the *Didache* community. Moreover, certain instructions in this section show signs of interpolations on the source materials. These interpolations may also reflect the particular concerns of the Didachist. Therefore, the selection and details of the instructions may reveal the concerns of the *Didache* community. Hence, by paying

[126] Victor Turner, *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1967), 38–46.
[127] Pardee, "Visualizing," 84.
[128] Draper, "Pure Sacrifice," 225–28.

attention to the characteristics of the *Didache*'s Two Ways section, one may also gain insights into the tensions experienced by the community.

5.4.1 Jewish Roots and Christianization

Did 1–6 clearly shows adherence to Jewish traditions. For example, in the *teknon* section (*Did* 3), the authority of the Decalogue is simply assumed.[129] The section's conceptual framework and literary expressions from light to weighty sins also resemble rabbinic discussions.[130] This shows that the *Didache* community was to some extent still living in the ambit of the Torah.[131] However, the "Torah observance" must be qualified by the insertion of Christianized materials into the Two Ways tradition.[132] This is especially clear in the *sectio evangelica* (1:3–2:1), which is usually regarded as an interpolation of Jesus traditions in the Two Ways source.[133] In the *Didache*, these sayings of Jesus are represented as being in continuity with the Mosaic Law,[134] but more authoritative, since it is presented at the beginning of the Two Ways teaching, rendering what follows as the "second commandment of the teaching" (δευτέρα δὲ ἐντολὴ τῆς διδαχῆς).[135] Moreover, the subsuming of the ethical instructions under the double love commandment and a negative form of the Golden Rule (1:2) as governing principles may also show influences of Christian traditions.[136] Therefore, the Two Ways section in the *Didache* may be described as a Christianized Jewish tradition of ethical teachings.

This Christianizing of the Jewish Two Ways tradition indicates that the *Didache* community was undergoing a development in the Christian self-identity

[129] John S. Kloppenborg, "The Transformation of Moral Exhortation in *Didache* 1–5," in *The* Didache *in Context*, ed. Clayton N. Jefford (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 102. Koester also comments that The description of the "way of life" in the *Didache* is nothing but an interpretation of the Decalogue. See Koester, "Apostolic Fathers," 136.
[130] van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 165–72.
[131] Draper, "Torah and Troublesome Apostles," 362, van de Sandt, "Essentials of Ethics," 244–45.
[132] Contra Kloppenborg, "*Didache* 1–5," 108. Kloppenborg claims that the Two Ways section of the *Didache* is not Christianized by inserting identifiably Christian claims.
[133] *Niederwimmer*, *Didache*, 68.
[134] Reed, "Hebrew Epic," 219.
[135] Pardee, "Visualizing," 82–83.
[136] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 66. However, it is pointed out that the combination of the double love commandments and the Golden Rule are also rooted in Jewish traditions. See van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 155–60.

over against traditional Judaism.[137] While still adopting the Jewish tradition of ethical instructions, the *Didache* community accepts a higher authority than the Jewish tradition for the interpretation of the Torah. This would definitely cause tensions with other Jewish groups. Social-scientific studies show that competition of authoritative claims produces an either/or power structure, which leads to repulsion of the rival group(s).[138] Although the Two Ways section of the *Didache* is not as polemical as *Did* 8, one may still discern the Jewish-Christian tension implicit in it.

5.4.2 Perfection

The Christianization of the Two Ways tradition also bears implications for the interpretation of the exhortation about "perfection" in 6:2. *Did* 6:2–3 is a crucial passage for interpreting the *Didache* community's stance on Judaism and the Torah. The passage is missing in the Two Ways tradition in *Barnabas*, the *Doctrina Apostolorum*, and the *Apostolic Constitutions*. Hence, these two verses are usually considered as a later addition to the original ending of the Two Ways source (6:1), and hence a direct indicator of the Didachist's concern.[139]

Did 6:2 reads: εἰ μὲν γὰρ δύνασαι βαστάσαι ὅλον τὸν ζυγὸν τοῦ κυρίου τέλειος ἔσῃ εἰ δ' οὐ δύνασαι ὃ δύνῃ τοῦτο ποίει (if you can bear the whole yoke of the Lord, you will be perfect, but if you cannot, do what you can.) This verse may be taken from some traditional sayings, but what this verse means in the *Didache* must be determined by the present context, and it is this meaning that would reflect the situation of the *Didache* community.[140] It is clear that the *Didache* here sets for Christians a target of perfection, which is to be achieved by bearing the whole yoke of the Lord. However, it also reflects the reality that some Christians are not meeting this standard of perfection, and hence a concession is given. What is mostly debated is the meaning of "the whole yoke of the Lord." No evidence in the *Didache* supports

[137] Pardee, "Visualizing," 82–83. Williams also claims that the inclusion of the *sectio evangelica* defines and distinguishes its author and audience from other Israelite groups. See Ritva H. Williams, "Social Memory and the *Didache*," *BTB* 36 (2006): 38.
[138] Wilmot et. al., *Interpersonal Conflict*, 97–99.
[139] See for example Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 121.
[140] Flusser points out that the Didachist may not understand the saying by its original meaning in the source. See Flusser, "Paul's Jewish-Christian Opponents," 199.

those old interpretations which regard the yoke as referring to sexual asceticism.[141] In recent scholarship, one major opinion is that the phrase refers to the whole Torah, since it is the traditional meaning of ζυγόν in Jewish texts.[142] Then it would suggest that the *Didache* community is still fully Torah-observant, and prefers the Gentile Christians to observe the whole Torah,[143] even though a "flexible timetable" is allowed for Gentiles to become a full Jew.[144] Moreover, this interpretation suggests that "false teachers" indicated in 6:1 refer to those who teach that perfection can be attained without observing the whole Torah.[145] Nevertheless, several commentators observe that the qualification τοῦ κυρίου, as well as the addition of the *sectio evangelica* into the Two Ways tradition, indicate that the yoke is now the Torah as interpreted by Jesus Christ, or by the Christian community under the influence of the Jesus tradition.[146] Such "Christianization" of the Torah already shows some extent of deviation from the original meaning of the yoke as the Torah in Jewish traditions.[147] Hence, the concept of perfection and the yoke of the Lord in *Did* 6:2 cannot be interpreted solely on the basis of traditional Jewish understandings.

[141] Harnack, *Lehre*, 19–21, Knopf, *Lehre*, 21.
[142] Draper, "Torah and Troublesome Apostles," 352–57. See also Celia Deutsch, *Hidden Wisdom and the Easy Yoke: Wisdom, Torah and Discipleship in Matthew 11:25–30*, JSNTSup 18 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1987), 113–40.
[143] Slee, *Church in Antioch*, 83–86, Wim J.C. Weren, "The Ideal Community According to Matthew, James and the Didache," in *Matthew, James and Didache*, eds. Huub van de Sandt and Jürgen K. Zangenberg, (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 196–98. Stuiber suggests that Gentile Christians are welcome to observe the Jewish ritual laws as far as possible. See Alfred Stuiber, "'Das ganze Joch des Herrn' (Didache 6,2–3)," *StPatr* 4.2, TU 79 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1961), 328.
[144] Draper, "Torah and Troublesome Apostles," 359. Similarly, Mitchell asserts that a baptized Gentile remains inferior to Torah-observant Jewish-Christians, and the Gentile converts are expected to become full Jews at the end. See Nathan Mitchell, "Baptism in the *Didahce*," in *The* Didache *in Context*, , ed. Clayton N. Jefford (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 237. See also a similar interpretation in Matti Myllykoski, "Without Decree: Pagan Sacrificial Meat and the Early History of the Didache," in *The Didache: A Missing Piece of the Puzzle in Early Christianity*, eds. J.A. Draper and Clayton N. Jefford, ECIL 14 (Atlanta: SBL, 2015), 443–46.
[145] van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 270.
[146] Draper, "Torah and Troublesome Apostles," 354, Huub van de Sandt, "'Bearing the Entire Yoke of the Lord': An Explanation of Didache 6:2 in the Light of Matthew 11:28–30," in *The Scriptures of Israel in Jewish and Christian Tradition: Essays in Honour of Maarten J.J. Menken*, eds. Bart J. Koet et. al., NovTSup 148 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 344, Rordorf and Tuilier, *Doctrine*, 32–33, William Varner, *The Way of the Didache: The First Christian Handbook* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2007), 70–71.
[147] In contrast to Draper, Finlan observes that the instructions in the *Didache* are not Torah-specific but more about general morality. See Finlan, "Identity," 19–21.

One biblical passage particularly relevant to *Did* 6:2 is Matt 11:28–30.[148] The latter passage also mentions the Lord's yoke, which probably refers to Jesus' interpretation of the Torah.[149] Although the contexts of the two passages are different, the Matthean passage at least indicates that the early church had an understanding of God's requirement for his people different from the Jewish teachings, and was thus involved in a struggle with Jewish communities for authoritative claims.[150] Therefore, it is possible that the *Didache* also has a view of Christian obligation different from the Jewish observance of the Torah. Moreover, the different depictions of the yoke of the Lord in the two passages[151] need not imply a different reference for the yoke. Rather, the difference could be attributed to the different contexts. The Matthew passage is polemical, focusing on the contrast between Jesus' and the Pharisees' interpretations of the Law. Hence, it stresses the lightness of the yoke in comparison with the heavy burden the Pharisees place on God's people. On the other hand, the *Didache* passage focus mainly on members of the community. It concerns "a tension between the high *ideal* of perfection and the more modest *practical* requirements."[152] Hence, it stresses the effort to pursue perfection, even though Christians may experience their own incapability. Therefore, the different stresses need not imply that the *Didache* has a different stance towards the Torah and Judaism as compared to Matthew.

Another consideration for interpreting *Did* 6:2 is the concept of perfection in other passages in the *Didache*. Besides 6:2, the adjective τέλειος also appears in 1:4, and the verb τελειόω occurs in 10:5 and 16:2. In 16:2, Christians are warned that they have to be perfected at the end, otherwise the whole time of their belief will be profitless. However, this passage does not shed much light on the meaning of perfection. In particular, nothing in this verse suggests that perfection means total

[148] For a detailed comparison of the two passages, see van de Sandt, "'Bearing the Entire Yoke," 331–44.
[149] Deutsch, *Hidden Wisdom*, 40–44.
[150] Paul Foster, *Community, Law and Mission in Matthew's Gospel*, WUNT 2/177 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 94–217.
[151] Some commentators observe that while Matthew stresses that the yoke of the Lord is light, the *Didache* supposes that not every Christian is able to bear the entire yoke. See Jefford, *Sayings of Jesus*, 94–95, Weren, "Ideal Community," 197.
[152] Kari Syreeni, "The Sermon on the Mount and the Two Ways Teaching of the Didache." In *Matthew and the Didache*, ed. Huub van de Sandt (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 96, emphasis original.

observance of the Torah, or becoming a full Jew. Moreover, the passive voice of τελειωθῆτε in *Did* 16:2 is suggestive.[153] It indicates that perfection is ultimately a divine action, thus making it unlikely that *Did* 16:2 is expecting Gentile Christians to become Torah-observing Jews.

It is the other two occasions of the word "perfect" that is more helpful for understanding the concept of perfection in the *Didache*. In 1:4, after the command of turning the other cheek, the comment "and you will be perfect" (καὶ ἔσῃ τέλειος) is added. Here the notion of perfection seems to be associated with the particular command of turning the other cheek, although the association may be extended to other exhortations in 1:3–4.[154] Hence, the passage discloses that perfection is exhibited in the moral standard set by the Lord, especially that of loving the enemies. Not only does this observation confirm the interpretation that the yoke in 6:2 is not the Torah as such but the Christian interpretation of the law, it also shows that the moral aspects of the law is particularly in view when the *Didache* exhorts Christians to pursue perfection.[155] On the other hand, in the Eucharistic prayer in 10:5, Christians are to pray for the Lord to preserve the church from all evil and to perfect her in his love, which means she will be sanctified and gathered from the four winds into the kingdom of the Lord. Hence, perfection here is associated with the complete realization of God's promises to the church, as distinguished from personal perfection.[156] These two kinds of perfection should be regarded as complementary descriptions of the same eschatological hope. Hartin correctly observes that in the *Didache*, the concept of perfection gives expression of the church's identity, which means Christians "will attain wholeness and integrity in their relationship with God,

[153] In contrast to most translations, Draper interprets the verb as middle by translating it as "perfects him/herself". See Draper, "Torah and Troublesome Apostles," 359. However, the actions of assembling and seeking in 16:2a should be understood as providing the suitable environment for the Christians to be perfected, instead of active actions of perfecting oneself. Moreover, those actions do not indicate a target of becoming a full Jew, as suggested by Draper.
[154] Bentley Layton, "The Sources, Date and Transmission of *Didache* 1:3b–2:1," *HTR* 61 (1968): 352–58.
[155] Repschinski, "Purity," 393 asserts that purity in the *Didache* is not to ensure proper worship, but to encourage moral behaviour among believers, related to practical life within the community.
[156] Taras Khomych, "The Admonition to Assemble Together in *Didache* 16.2 Reappraised," *VC* 61 (2007): 132. See also Enrico Mazza, *The Origins of the Eucharistic Prayer* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1995), 29.

one another and themselves."[157] However, it should be noted that in view of the ethical focus in *Did* 1–5, the importance of moral behaviours for perfection should not be downplayed. For the *Didache*, the church's relationship with God and with other people is to be realized in the moral standard of Christians.

The above discussion shows that the "yoke of the Lord" in *Did* 6:2 is not the Torah as understood from a normative Jewish perspective, but Torah as interpreted in a Christian perspective. It refers to the Two Ways section itself, or the teachings of the *Didache* in general. The *Didache* does not require Gentile Christians to observe the whole Torah in a Jewish way.[158] Rather, both Jewish and Gentile Christians are exhorted to "reach the highest possible standard of Christian obligations,"[159] which is captured in the moral teaching in *Did* 1–5. However, the command about food in 6:3 has still to be considered. Does the mention of bearing whatever one can about food indicates that Jewish laws are in view after all?

The first thing to notice is that 6:3 begins with περὶ δέ, which is used four times in *Did* 7–15 to introduce new topics (7:1; 9:1, 3; 11:3).[160] Hence, the exhortation about food should be regarded as one in this sequence of teachings. It gives one example of the ways of pursuing perfection, but not necessarily the most essential one. Therefore, the reference to food laws in 6:3 does not give a sufficient basis to suggest that the "whole yoke of the Lord" refers to full Torah observance in a Jewish way, even though some issues concerning food may be among the Didachist's idea of perfection.[161] Moreover, a closer look at 6:3 reveals that the logic of this verse is similar to the precepts in the *teknon* section, which warns against lighter sins for they leads to weightier sins. The more pressing issue of 6:3 is the

[157] Hartin, "Ethics," 301.
[158] van de Sandt, "Essentials of Ethics," 260. However, he also observes that the *Didache*, unlike Paul, does not prohibit Gentile Christians from observing the whole Torah either. Rather observing the whole Torah is still advisable for Gentile Christians. Against this view, there is indeed nothing in the *Didache* to suggested that Gentiles are advised to fully observe the Torah.
[159] Flusser, "Paul's Jewish-Christian Opponents," 199.
[160] Pardee suggests from this observation that 6:3 may have been added as the Two ways tradition is incorporated with the ritual section of the *Didache*. See Pardee, *Genre and Development*, 184.
[161] Skarsaune observes that 6:2–3 is the only passage in the whole catechism concerned with ritual commandments, and the rest is ethical. Hence, the concept of perfection should not be understood in terms of full conversion to Judaism. See Oskar Skarsaune, *In the Shadow of the Temple: Jewish Influences on Early Christianity* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2002), 359–63.

rejection of food offered to idols, which is considered to be equivalent to worship of dead gods. The instruction in 6:3 does not regard the apostolic decree as the minimum level of Torah observance,[162] but provides the necessary measure to prevent Christians from having anything to do with idolatry, which is among the way of death (3:4; 5:1).[163] Such an interpretation has the further advantage of making 6:3 a more appropriate transition from the moral teachings to the ritual section that follows, which is related to the community's worship of God.

Furthermore, "bearing what you can about food" does not necessarily refer to the commandments regarding food in the OT and Jewish traditions.[164] Other explanations are possible.[165] In particular, Paul's discussion in 1 Cor 8, 10 may be relevant.[166] Admittedly, one has to be cautious in assuming *Did* 6:3 is dealing with the same problem as in 1 Cor. However, 1 Cor reveals that in the early church, there were problems about food that does not concern the Jewish food law as such. Hence, it is possible that the command περὶ δὲ τῆς βρώσεως ὃ δύνασαι βάστασον in *Did* 6:3, instead of promoting the Jewish food law, refers to other issues concerning food among the *Didache* community. Moreover, the use of the word εἰδωλόθυτος in both passages is suggestive.[167] This may indicate that the two passages have some similar concerns in view. In 1 Cor, Paul's ultimate concern is not food, but idol worship (10:18–21). Hence it lends support to the suggestion that the principle concern of *Did* 6:3 is not food laws but idol worship.

In summary, there is nothing in the *Didache* to suggest that perfection means full Torah observance. Instead, perfection is compliance with the teachings of the community, especially those moral teachings collected in the Two Ways section, but also the teachings on rituals and community life. This perfection is also associated

[162] Contra Draper, "Two Ways and Eschatological Hope," 232.
[163] In the admonition against idolatry in 3:4, the text gives more intense warnings as compared to other admonitions in the *teknon* section. This shows that idolatry is one of the particular concern of the Didachist. See Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 95–96.
[164] Contra Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 123.
[165] For example, Harnack, *Lehre*, 21 suggests that *Did* 6:3 is not about Jewish food laws, but specifically about the eating of flesh.
[166] van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 253.
[167] The word is not common in the New Testament. Besides 1 Cor, it only appears four times, in Act 15, 21 and Rev 2.

with the community's eschatological hope, as the church awaits God to gather her into his kingdom and make her perfect. The teaching about perfection in the *Didache* reflects two aspects of tension in the community. First, a different understanding of perfection causes tensions with other Jewish communities, since the church has to compete with these communities for the authoritative claim about the interpretation of God's word, a concern also reflected in the Christianization of the Jewish Two Ways tradition, as well as the pressing attempts to distinguish the community from other Jews in *Did* 7–10. Second, *Did* 6:2 reveals a tension within the community itself, as Christians find themselves falling short of the standard set in *Did* 1–5. This would cause frustration among the Christians, thus producing a psychological barrier for members from adhering to the community.[168] This is the reason why the Didachist added the concession after the original ending of the Two Ways section.

5.4.3 Against Pagan Practices

Some of the instructions in *Did* 1–6 seem to be directed particularly against pagan practices. The inclusion of these admonitions in the *Didache* reflects some particular concerns for the *Didache* community, especially for the Gentile converts among it. This is not to say that these instructions do not come from Jewish traditions. Indeed, most of these admonitions can be traced back to the OT. Nevertheless, it should be noted that those corresponding prohibitions in the OT are also directed against Gentile practices, and Israelites are warned not to imitate them.

The first example to be noted is the list of admonitions in 2:2, where six prohibitions are added to four commandments from the Decalogue. The second admonition, you shall not commit adultery, is expanded by a pair of related prohibitions, you shall not corrupt children (οὐ παιδοφθορήσεις) and you shall not fornicate (οὐ πορνεύσεις).[169] These refer to different kinds of illicit sex not uncommon in the ancient world.[170] It is likely that at least some of the Gentile converts were not resistant to such practices before they joined the Christian

[168] When aspirations outstrip reality, discontent and agitation would arise, causing tensions and conflict. See Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 21–22. See also James C. Davies, "Toward a Theory of Revolution," *ASR* 27 (1962): 5–19.
[169] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 89.
[170] Milavec, *Didache*, 131–37.

community. Hence, the *Didache* has to stress the prohibition of these sexual offenses. Next, between the Decalogue commandments "you shall not steal" and "you shall not covet what belongs to your neighbour," two pairs of prohibitions are inserted. The first pair concerns practicing magic (μαγεύω) and making drugs (φαρμακεύω).[171] Although magical lore and enchantments were also found among Jews,[172] they were more common among pagans and especially abhorrent when practiced by Gentiles.[173] The second pair of prohibitions concerns abortion and killing new-born children (οὐ φονεύσεις τέκνον ἐν φθορᾷ οὐδὲ γεννηθὲν ἀποκτενεῖς). These practices were accepted within Hellenistic culture as a normal mode of family limitation.[174] In summary, all three pairs of addition to the Decalogue in *Did* 2:2 represent practices that Gentiles would be used to before they were converted to Christianity, and would be particularly odious to Jewish sensibilities.[175] Hence, it would be necessary to emphasize these prohibitions to Gentile converts, in order to induce acceptable moral standards in them and to avoid tension between Jewish and Gentile Christians.

The second emphasis against pagan practices can be found in the prohibition against idolatry in 3:4. It is the third among the five sayings in the *teknon* section. The five sayings have a consistent structure consisting of two pairs of warning and reason.[176] However, the third saying has an expanded second warning, which contains four prohibitions,[177] whereas the other four sayings have only two. Together with the first warning in 3:4, the saying warns against being omen-observer (οἰωνοσκόπος), enchanter (ἐπαοιδός), astrologer (μαθηματικός), and performing of purificatory rituals (περικαθαίρω). Christians should not even want to see such things

[171] The verb refers to making poison or magical potions. See BDAG s.v. φαρμακεύω.
[172] One example is the *Songs of the Sage* found in the Dead Sea Scrolls (4Q510–511). The document consists of hymns for protecting the sons of light from evil spirits. See Maurice Baillet, *Qumran Cave 4: III (4Q482-520)*, DJD 7 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 215 and Johann Maier, "Songs of the Sage," *EDSS*, 2:890. For other evidence of magical practices among Jews, see Philip S. Alexander, "Incantations and Books of Magic," in Emil Schürer, *A History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), 3:342–79, Margaret H. Williams, *Jews in a Graeco-Roman Environment*, WUNT 312 (Tübingen : Mohr, 2013), 88–89, and Pieter van der Horst, *The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides with Introduction and Commentary*, SVTP 4 (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 213.
[173] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 89.
[174] Robin Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (London: Viking, 1986), 343.
[175] Milavec, *Didache*, 139–40. Judith M. Lieu, *Christian Identity in the Jewish and Greaco-Roman World* (Oxford: OUP, 2004), 174–75 observes that these admonitions show an ambiguity of continuity with Jewish heritage, which may indicate an awareness of the Pagan environment.
[176] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 96.
[177] Some versions have five with an additional μηδὲ ἀκούειν. See Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 98 n38.

(μηδὲ θέλε αὐτὰ βλέπειν). The extended warnings indicate that the issue of idolatry was one of critical concern for the *Didache* community.[178] Although these actions were also practiced by some Jews,[179] the connection to idolatry (εἰδωλολατρία) suggests that they are perceived as typically pagan.[180] The wide-spread customs of idolatry among Gentiles was a particular threat for the early Christians.

One more example of admonition particularly directed against Gentiles is found in 5:2. *Did* 5 contains a vice list which is to be avoided as the way of death. Many of the prohibitions in *Did* 1–4, such as murder, adultery, idolatry, magic and children murdering are repeated in this chapter. Of particular interest here is the rebuke for "not knowing him that made them" (οὐ γινώσκοντες τὸν ποιήσαντα αὐτούς). This is a particular description of Gentiles.[181] This again shows that the deficiency in ethical standard among Gentiles is among the main concerns of the *Didache*.

The emphasis on particular Gentile behaviours in the *Didache*'s Two Ways section shows a concern about group norms. Group norms function to dovetail the aspirations of members and hence reduce the likelihood of conflict.[182] Conflict is more likely to arise when a community lacks normative consensus. In the *Didache* community, where Jewish and Gentile Christians, with their different social and cultural backgrounds, come together, ambiguity about norms would be likely to occur if authoritative norms are not set clearly. Such tension among the community would be a motivation for the Didachist to stress unacceptable pagan behaviours when he adopted the Two Ways tradition.

5.4.4 Inter-communal and Intra-communal Interactions

Another feature of the Two Ways section in the *Didache* to be noted is the existence of some expounded precepts about community interactions. Some of these

[178] Slee, *Church in Antioch*, 80.
[179] Milavec, *Didache*, 150–54.
[180] Draper suggests that all the five sayings in the *teknon* section reflect the Noachic Laws, which are directed to Gentiles. See Draper, "Commentary," 65–76.
[181] Although the Israelites are rebuked for not knowing God in Hos 5:4, the prophet is indeed rebuking them as behaving like Gentiles.
[182] Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 26–27.

precepts are further discussed in later parts of the *Didache*, and some find counterparts in James. From these instructions, one may discern some of the tensions in the *Didache* community.

A passage that attracts attention is *Did* 1:4, which contains several exhortations similar to Matt 5:38–42 and Luke 6:29–30. What is interesting is the last sentence, οὐδὲ γὰρ δύνασαι (since you are not able), which is found neither in Matthew nor in Luke. There are different attempts to make sense of this puzzling clause. Some claim that the text is corrupted and try to emend it.[183] Others try to give a spiritual motivation for this addition.[184] However, as Niederwimmer suggests, these attempts are unnecessary. Instead, this additional clause reflects the social milieu of the *Didache* community: "they are exploited and helpless people who cannot and will not defend themselves."[185] Given the strong class division in the ancient world, it is probable that the disadvantaged poor is powerless to defend themselves against the oppression of the socially privileged. Hence, the instruction in *Did* 1:4 is not only given as an ideal moral standard for the community, but also a practical response to their own situation. Furthermore, the exploiters in view may not be only outsiders. It was not completely impossible that some exploiters were among the Christian communities.[186] Indeed, *Did* 11–12 at least suggests that the *Didache* community was in danger of being exploited by some who claim to be Christians or even leaders. Besides taking measures to avoid being exploited, the *Didache* also instructs community members how to behave when exploitation does occur.

Further instructions about giving follow in 1:5–6. The attitude of generosity recommended in 1:5a, which is again stressed in 4:5–8, matches similar concerns in

[183] See for example Layton, "Sources," 348–49.
[184] Knopf, *Lehre*, 9 asserts that the moral spirit of the Christian makes it impossible for him to take back what is taken away by counterforce or by legal means. On the other hand, the Georgian version reads, "and you cannot do this even for the sake of the faith." See Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 79 n80.
[185] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 79–80.
[186] Milavec, *Didache*, 98–99 suggests that the enemies in *Did* 1:3–4 are indeed the Christians' relatives and friends who turned against them as a result of their religious convictions. See also Aaron Milavec, "The Social Setting of 'Turning the Other Cheek' and 'Loving One's Enemies' in Light of the Didache," *BTB* 25 (1995): 131–43. His suggestion may have gone too far, but does raise the possibility that the enemies may not only be complete outsiders. On the other hand, Draper, "Moral Economy," 6 suggests that 1:3−4 provides a rule for conduct to outsiders, whereas 1:5−6 provides rules of conduct to insiders. However, such a sharp division is not necessary in view of the continuity of thought in the whole passage.

Did 11–13 and in synoptic traditions. However, further admonitions are then given to qualify the command "give to everyone what he asks of you." Firstly, a warning is given to those who take without being in need. Such a person will be held accountable for their taking and using of the resources, and may also be subjected to imprisonment until he has paid back what he owes. The last saying resembles the words of Jesus in Matt 5:25–26, but the topic of reconciliation in the Matthew passage is missing in *Did* 1:5. Instead, the *Didache* concerns here mainly the abuse of others' generosity. Besides functioning as a warning to the offenders, the saying also serves as a consolation for those being abused by promising justice, both in sense of community order and the eschatological judgment of God.[187] Secondly, an admonition is given in *Did* 1:6 about considering carefully the appropriate thing to do before giving away charitable gifts.[188] The incorporation of these admonitions in the *sectio evangelica* again indicates a concern for the generosity of the community being abused.

Another passage of interest is a series of admonitions concerning speech in 2:3–5, which resembles similar concerns about speech in James.[189] These include prohibitions against swearing falsely (ἐπιορκέω), [190] bearing false witness (ψευδομαρτυρέω), speaking evil (κακολογέω), remembering past injuries (μνησικακέω), double-minded or double tongued (διγνώμων, δίγλωσσος), and not fulfilling what one has said (ἔσται ὁ λόγος σου ψευδὴς οὐ κενός). The extension of this list shows that truthful speech is a particular concern of the Didahcist. Since honesty and mutual trust is an essential quality for community harmony and coherence,[191] one may discern in these admonitions about speech in the *Didache* a worry about distrust between community members, especially in face of the danger of being exploited as discussed above.

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[187] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 83 suggests that the underlying tradition in *Did* 1:5d can scarcely be understood except as eschatological. See also Rordorf and Tuilier, "Le problème de la transmission," 508. However, in the context of the *Didache*, if the offender is among the community, it is likely that community order is also in view. See Draper, "Moral Economy," 6.

[188] The phrase δὲ εἴρηται shows that the Didachist is quoting a traditional saying here, but the source of the saying is unclear. For a discussion, see Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 83–86.

[189] See above sections 3.4 and 3.5.

[190] Unlike Matt 5:33–37 and Jas 5:12, swearing as such is not prohibited in the *Didache*, but only falsely swearing is prohibited.

[191] Studies in conflicts have pointed out that distrust is a particular cause of conflict. See Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 25.

Did 2:7 also shows possible expansion from the source.[192] After the general precept οὐ μισήσεις πάντα ἄνθρωπον (you shall not hate any man), the text mentions three types of treatment to three types of people. The first type has to be reproved (ἐλέγχω). These are presumably members who have committed faults, and other members have the responsibility to point out their mistakes so that they may repent. The second type is to be prayed for. These are probably Christians who are in weakness, and possibly refers to those who show resistance to repent.[193] For the third group, community members are to love them more than themselves. This group can refer to any members that are not in fault, but in view of the theme of reprove and repentance apparent in the first two admonitions, it is probable that this third group refers to those who have repented from their faults. These advices are echoed in the instructions on reconciliation and reproof in *Did* 14–15. Moreover, Audet observes the resemblance of *Did* 2:7 with Jude 22–23.[194] The passage in Jude concerns Christians at faults in different degrees. It is apparent that *Did* 2:7 shows similar concerns for the community.

The concern for intra-communal interaction is also echoed in 4:3. Four commands are given in succession. The first is prohibition against causing division (οὐ ποθήσεις σχίσμα). This is probably a traditional saying for right behaviour in the Jewish house of study.[195] The second, in contrast to and forming a pair with the first one, demands reconciling those who quarrel (εἰρηνεύσεις δὲ μαχομένους). The third and fourth commands form another pair, which exhorts Christians to judge justly (κρινεῖς δικαίως) and not to show partiality in reproving for transgressions (οὐ λήψῃ πρόσωπον ἐλέγξαι ἐπὶ παραπτώμασιν). Milavec asserts that *Did* 4:3 addresses the darker side of community life: "dissention" and "fighting".[196] It seems likely that such "darker side" of community life was a real concern of the *Didache* community, especially since the theme of intra-communal tension is also seen in other parts of the *Didache*. Furthermore, one may notice several verbal links between *Did* 4:3 and

[192] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 92–93 comments that the verse seems overloaded and gives an impression of being secondary.
[193] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 93.
[194] Audet, *La Didachè*, 296.
[195] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 106.
[196] Milavec, "When, Why, and for Whom," 73.

James. In particular, the phrase λήψῃ πρόσωπον echoes προσωπολημψία in Jas 2:1. It has been discussed above that partiality is a real threat for the community in James.[197] Although in the *Didache* no further elaboration is given on the theme of partiality, it is still possible that partiality forms a real threat to the *Didache* community.

Another interesting verbal link with James is found in *Did* 4:4. This verse contains a puzzling saying, οὐ διψυχήσεις πότερον ἔσται ἢ οὔ (You shall not be undecided whether it shall be or not.) Many attempts have been made to make sense of this admonition.[198] Here it may be noted that the verb διψυχέω, which is found neither in the New Testament nor in the Septuagint, echoes δίψυχος in Jas 1:8; 4:8, a word which is also not found elsewhere in the Bible. If, as Porter suggests, the term is originated with James,[199] *Did* 4:4 may be another place showing Christianization of the Two Ways tradition. In light of the theme of double-mindedness in James, *Did* 4:4 may be interpreted as a warning about indecision in choosing one's way, both in personal and community lives. This may reflect a concern for some members not whole-heartedly committed to the community, thus blurring the communities' boundaries with the wider society.

The last point to be noted is the household code contained in 4:9–11, which is similar to those found in the NT.[200] It indicates that social relations was a problem in the early church. In particular, the elaborated instructions on master-slave relation in 4:9–10 may indicate that mistreatment of slaves, which was a common practice, may be disrupting harmony in the church.[201] Hence proper treatment of slaves has to be stressed in order to preserve the cohesiveness of Christian communities.

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[197] See above section 3.6.1.
[198] See Niederwimmer, *Didache,* 106–7. In particular, Niederwimmer suggests that in the context of 4:3, the only probable meaning is the indecision of a judge who does not dare to decide or regrets the decision that has been reached. However, as 4:3 shows no close connection to both 4:1–2 and 4:5–8, it is not necessary either to assume a close connection between 4:3 and 4:4.
[199] Stanley E. Porter, "Is *dipsuchos* (James 1,8; 4,8) a 'Christian' Word?" *Bib* 71 (1990): 469–98.
[200] For example, Eph 5:22–6:5; 1 Pet 2:13–3:9.
[201] Draper, "Moral Economy," 9, Draper, "Children and Slaves," 91–103.

5.4.5 Concluding Summary

Did 1–6 adopts much traditional material, both Jewish and Christian. However, some features of this section show the hand of the Didachist, and thus indicate some of the particular concerns of the document. The Christianization of the Jewish Two Ways section, especially the insertion of the *sectio evangelica* before other traditional Two Ways sayings, indicates a tension between authoritative claims of the church and other Jewish communities. In the *Didache*, the Torah itself is no longer considered as the means to perfection. Rather, the law has to be properly interpreted by the authority of Jesus, with particular emphasis on personal and community ethics. On the other hand, some admonitions in the *Didache* Two Ways are directed especially against Gentile practices. This shows that the discrepancy in moral standards of Gentile converts was also a pressing concern of the *Didache* community. By subjecting both Jewish and Gentile Christians under the same moral standard, the *Didache* may serve to unify the whole community in its pursuit of perfection.

Furthermore, several aspects of *Did* 1–6 shows concerns for community order and harmony. For example, the command to love enemies is interpreted as "a pragmatic strategy of conflict reduction."[202] In particular, while generosity is encouraged, instructions are also given to guard against abuse. Moreover, extensive lists and elaborations are given concerning speech, reproof, reconciliation, meekness, and social relations. Together with the community concerns in other parts of the *Didache*, these admonitions indicate that community cohesiveness is indeed an important concern of the document.

5.5 Community in Eschatological Period (*Did* 16)

The *Didache* ends with an chapter on eschatology, which breaks off abruptly at 16:8.[203] It is suggested that this chapter was originally the ending of the Two Ways section, as seen in similar schemes in other contemporary Jewish and Christian

[202] John S. Kloppenborg, "The Use of the Synoptics or Q in *Did* 1:3–2:1," in *Matthew and the Didache*, ed. Huub van de Sandt (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 127.

[203] It is generally agreed that the ending of the chapter is lost. An attempt to reconstruct the lost ending is made in Robert E. Aldridge, "The Lost Ending of the *Didache*," *VC* 53 (1999): 1–15. However, such reconstructions remain inconclusive.

writings.[204] Such a position is challenged,[205] and other sources of *Did* 16 is proposed.[206] It is not the purpose of this study to settle this problem of sources. As Khomych observes, too much emphasis on the connection between *Did* 16 and the Two Ways section runs the risk of overlooking the connection between the eschatological discourse and the material following the Two Ways section.[207] Hence, even if the eschatological ending of the *Didache* was originally connected to the Two Ways teaching, attentions must be paid to the function of this final chapter in the present form of the document.

Within *Did* 16, a seam is noted between 16:1–2 and 16:3–8, with the former regarded as a paraenetic section and the latter an apocalyptic section.[208] Balabanski further suggests that the apocalyptic warnings only function as a motivation for the ethical teachings, as the eschatological expectation has lost its fervency.[209] If the last days are only regarded as in the future, it would imply that the eschatological theme in *Did* 16 "does not deal with a real situation of anxiety and peril ... The section was not meant to admonish and comfort a community suffering from tension and repression."[210] However, such views do not do justice to the intense practical

[204] See for example Ernst Bammel, "Pattern and Prototype of *Didache* 16," in *The* Didache *in Modern Research*, ed. Jonathan A. Draper (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 364–72, Drews, "Untersuchungen," 68–73, Kraft, *Barnabas and the Didache*, 12–16, John M. Creed, "The Didache," *JTS* 39 (1938): 379, Knopf, *Lehre*, 2, Köster, *Synoptische Überlieferung*, 160, Del Verme, *Didache and Judaism*, 243–51.
[205] See for example Rordorf and Tuilier, *La Doctrine*, 80–83, Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 207–8, van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 37–40.
[206] A traditional view is that *Did* 16 depends on Matt 24. See Vokes, *Riddle*, 111, Basil C. Butler, "The Literary Relations of Didache Ch. XVI," *JTS* n.s. 11 (1960): 280–81, Giet, *L'énigme*, 244–45, Massaux, *Influence*, 3:167–73, Tuckett, "Synoptic Tradition," 95–104, 108–10. Others propose a common source for both Matt 24 and *Did* 16. See Glover, "Didache's Quotations," 21–25, John S. Kloppenborg, "Didache 16.6–8 and Special Matthaean Tradition," *ZNW* 70 (1979): 54–67, van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 39, Jonathan A. Draper, "The Development of 'The Sign of the Son of Man' in the Jesus Tradition," *NTS* 39 (1993): 14–15. Myllkoski also takes this position, and suggests that *Did* 16 was added to the Two Ways treatise in the context of the Jewish War. See Myllykoski, "Without Decree," 446–51. Furthermore, Seeliger suggests that *Did* 16 preserves the preaching of the prophets attested in the *Didache*, and Garrow even suggests that *Did* 16 is the Christian eschatological teaching behind 1 Thess. See Hans Reinhard Seeliger, "Considerations on the Background and Purpose of the Apocalyptic Conclusion of the Didache," in *The* Didache *in Modern Research*, ed. Jonathan A. Draper (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 373–83 and Alan J.P. Garrow, "The Eschatological Tradition behind 1 Thessalonians: *Didache* 16," *JSNT* 32 (2009): 191–215.
[207] Khomych, "*Didache* 16.2," 124–26.
[208] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 207, 217.
[209] Victoria Balabanski, *Eschatology in the Making: Mark, Matthew and the Didache*, SNTSMS 97 (Cambridge: University Press, 1997), 208.
[210] van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 40.

overtone of *Did* 16.[211] In particular, it should be noted that the main concern of 16:1, as in Matt 24–25, is not the uncertainty of the hour of the Lord's coming, but the necessity of being ready for that hour. This indicates that the *Didache* still understands the Christian community as living in the imminence of the eschaton. Moreover, the appearance of false prophets (16:3) is a present concern of the community, as seen in *Did* 11. Hence the dangers of the "last days" are not merely future events, but are immediate concerns of the community. Furthermore, Draper observes that there is a shift from γάρ clauses (16:2–4a) to τότε clauses (16:4b–8), thus marking "a subtle change from present experience to future expectation."[212] This implies that the apocalyptic materials, especially those in 16:3–4a, are related to the present struggles of the *Didache* community.

In view of the resemblance between *Did* 16 and Matt 24,[213] it is possible to compare the backgrounds of these two passages. In particular, Matt 24 indicates that the church was suffering attacks both from outside and inside, with persecution from outside leading to defections and treachery inside.[214] However, it is observed that *Did* 16 omits the natural and political disasters in Matt 24:6–7 and downplays the outsider perspective of Matt 24:9, thus focusing exclusively on the threats within.[215] The intra-communal concern is evident in the text of *Did* 16. On the one hand, the community is exhorted to assemble frequently (16:2). On the other hand, 16:3 warns about sheep turning into wolves and love turning into hate. These warnings may allude to former believers who have become enemies.[216] Such danger is also revealed in 16:4a, where hate, persecution and betrayal are said to follow from the increase of lawlessness. In particular, the verb παραδίδωμι (betray) may indicate that apostate Christians are denouncing their former fellow believers to the authorities.[217] Even the warning against the anti-Christ (16:4b) may reflect division within the community.[218]

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[211] William C. Varner, "The *Didache* 'Apocalypse' and Matthew 24," *BSac* 165 (2008): 315.
[212] Draper, "Two Ways and Eschatological Hope," 245.
[213] For a summary of parallels between *Did* 16 and Matt 24, see Myllykoski, "Without Decree," 448.
[214] Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church under Persecution*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 479.
[215] Joseph Verheyden, "Eschatology in the Didache and the Gospel of Matthew," in *Matthew and the Didache*, ed. Huub van de Sandt (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 203–9.
[216] Köster, *Synoptische Überlieferung*, 179.
[217] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 218.
[218] Draper, "Social Ambiguity," 285.

It is in view of such tribulation that the *Didache* calls believers to stay alert and to pursue perfection till the final time.[219] The concern for community cohesiveness in the whole of the *Didache* is not lost in the final chapter. All the instructions in *Did* 1–15 are consummated into the final exhortations in *Did* 16.

As a final remark, it should be noted that apostates do not only pose to Christians immediate danger such as being arrested. There are further impacts for the community. In the face of apostasy and betrayal, the stability of a community would be seriously jeopardized, since distrust and enmity would easily build up.[220] In such circumstances, the group boundary has to be sharpened to ensure community solidarity.

5.6 Conclusion

The *Didache* is not merely a loosely organized collection of traditional teachings. In the document, traditional materials are adopted and adapted in response to the need of the community. The various parts of this selective church order for early believers have a coherent purpose, that is, to deal with the hazards that threaten the solidarity of the church.

The above study has investigated the community tensions reflected in the instructions of the *Didache*. There were challenges from both inter-communal and intra-communal interactions. On the one hand, the community had to distinguish itself from other Jewish communities as well as from pagan cultures of the Greco-Roman society. The former can be seen in the ritual instructions that transforms the Jewish roots into Christian practices, especially in the polemic against the "hypocrites". It is also indicated in the Christianization of the Two Ways section, which prioritizes the Jesus tradition over the traditional Jewish teachings. The latter is reflected in the instructions in the Two Ways section that are directed particularly against pagan practices, especially idolatry. On the other hand, the *Didache* community experienced internal disputes. False teachers that brought in teachings

[219] Khomych, "*Didache* 16.2," 129.
[220] Such situation may lead to a condition similar to security dilemma in conflict theory. See Pruitt and Kim *Social Conflict*, 25–26.

against the community norm, swindlers that abused the generosity of the community, insufficient respect for community leaders, discrepancies in the understanding and practice of rituals, disputes and grudges among community members, unrepentant offenders, and apostates that became enemies of the Christians, all these threaten the stability of the community. These depictions of the *Didache* community fit descriptions in conflict theories, which suggest scarcity of resources, distrust, status inconsistency, and lack of normative consensus as among the main causes of conflict. Therefore, from the *Didache* one witnesses struggles of the community under challenging circumstances.

It must be stressed that since the direct purpose of the *Didache* is to give instructions and guidelines for believers, the text itself does not directly offers a description of the community tensions in view. Hence, owing to the limitation of the method of mirror reading, the situations discussed above must contain a certain extent of speculation. Moreover, the situations of various local communities would probably differ from one another. However, with the aid of modern social-scientific studies on group behaviours, the possible community tensions behind the instructions in the *Didache* can become more discernible. This discernment of possible tensions among early believers provides a suitable foundation for the discussion of the group maintenance strategy of the *Didache* in the next chapter.

The above survey has already hinted at some of the group-maintenance efforts in the *Didache*. In the next chapter, these strategies will be analyzed in more details with the aid of social-scientific theories. In particular, it will be shown that the regulations in the *Didache* serve to enhance the social identity of community members as the Christian group, which is the bearer of God's promises and blessings. To achieve this end, the *Didache* attempts to put the community in positive light, strengthen the group norm, and sharpen the boundaries between the community and rival groups.

Chapter 6
Group Maintenance Strategies in the *Didache*

This chapter will proceed to analyze the group maintenance strategies of the *Didache*. In particular, the focus will be on how the *Didache* establishes and consolidates the social identity of group members. A preliminary observation shows that all of the three basic elements for establishing social identity, namely, cognitive recognition, connotation of group value, and emotional aspect, are involved.[1] First, the cognitive recognition of belonging is enhanced by possessing and submitting to the authority of the *Didache* itself. Especially when group members memorize the text, it helps them to assure that they are part of the community.[2] Second, the core values of the group are expressed positively in the moral standard of the Two Ways section, the perception of reality conveyed in the community rituals and the regulations for community interactions. Third, the emotional dimensions are taken cared of in the *Didache* by establishing a sense of privilege of belonging to God, by highlighting the eschatological hope, and by depicting a strong contrast between the way of life and the way of death, placing rival groups in a negative light. In the following, these aspects of the *Didache* will be explored in more details.

6.1 Ingroup Bonding

Social-scientific studies indicate that several factors are important for cultivating a strong social identity. These include inculcation of group norms, interdependence of fate, and shared social memories.[3] In the *Didache*, group norms are articulated mainly by laying down explicit instructions for personal and community behaviours, consummated in the goal of perfection. The interdependence of fate is mostly established by the shared eschatological expectations expressed in the Eucharist rituals and the apocalyptic ending. As Lange observes, in the *Didache*, "life is community, where community includes the other in all of his or her difference."[4] The rituals also help to convey and transmit the shared social memories

[1] Turner, "Some Current Issues," 8, Esler, "Outline of Social Identity Theory," 17.
[2] Thomas O'Loughlin, "The Missionary Strategy of the *Didache*," *Transformation* 28 (2011): 80.
[3] See the introduction in section 1.3.1.1.
[4] Lange, "Liturgy Redefining Life," 210.

of the community, especially the memories about Jesus, which is the core of Christian identity as distinct from other groups.

On the other hand, to maintain a strong social identity, rifts within the group must be mended. To this end, the *Didache* may function like an imposed third party,[5] that is, an intermediate figure that is not invited by the parties in dispute, by claiming the authority of the teaching of the Lord through the twelve apostles. Besides explicitly giving exhortations for mutual correction and reconciliation, the *Didache* also cultivates a social environment that enhances conflict reduction. It can be seen that the *Didache* contributes to all of the four essential factors for conflict reduction according to Allport's model, namely, equal status within the contact situation; intergroup cooperation; common goals; and support of authorities, law, or custom.[6] Overall, the *Didache*'s perspective on conflict is a mixture of the harmony model and the regulative model.[7] It fits the former in its emphasis in smooth relationships, its emphasis on authorities who are from the party and its vision of a long-term, stable outcome. It fits the latter in its stress on application of principles, rules, and codes, and its emphasis on authorities in ascribed roles.

With the help of these perspectives and frameworks from social-scientific theories, this study turns to a closer investigation of the *Didache*'s strategies in strengthening ingroup bonding among the community.

6.1.1 Community as People-of-God

The primary identity that the *Didache* stresses for the community members is the people-of-God, those who received God's grace and promises through Jesus. As O'Loughlin observes:

> The community of the Didache saw itself as having chosen the Way of Live and rejected the Way of Death, and, as such, it was the community of the

[5] An imposed third party is a powerful party that imposes itself on disputants who are not always willing to have the intervention of the third party. See Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 230–31.
[6] Allport, *Nature of Prejudice*, 281.
[7] For the description of the models, see Kazan, "Culture and Conflict Management," 338–60.

> covenant established by Moses and described in Dt 30:14–8. Here, in the covenant, was the origin of their identity.[8]

This basic identity of the Christians is most clearly expressed in the ritual section. The baptismal formula in *Did* 7 indicates that as the converts are being baptized, they are put under the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. This new identity on the one hand distinguishes the convert from non-believers, as well as from his or her own previous identity, and on the other hand put the convert on the same footing of all other Christians.[9] As Milavec puts it: it is the turning point when a new set of social bonds replaces old ones.[10] This solidarity of the Christian community as the one people-of-God is further symbolized by the pre-baptismal fasting, which joins the baptizing convert, the baptizer, and other members of the community.

The distinctive identity as people-of-God is further emphasized in the Eucharist rituals. The Eucharistic prayers in *Did* 9–10, which are adopted from Jewish prayer traditions,[11] express the whole Christian community as the heir of God's promise to the Israel. In particular, Schwiebert asserts that in the threefold prayers in *Did* 10, the foremost concern is the eschatological gathering of God's people into his kingdom from the four winds.[12] This connotes a vision of unity of the whole Christian community, of which the *Didache* community is a part.[13] The same notion is also articulated in the prayer for the bread in 9:3–4, which draws an analogy between the unity of the bread and the eschatological gathering of the church.[14] Being the receivers of God's grace and promises promotes the positive distinctiveness of the community, which is essential in maintaining members' attachment to the group.[15] By repeatedly participating in the ritual, Christians are constantly reminded of their privileged position as the people-of-God, and hence

[8] O'Loughlin, "Missionary Strategy," 79.
[9] Contra Mitchell, "Baptism," 237, where Mitchell claims that baptism in the *Didache* does not create a community of equal disciples.
[10] Milavec, "When, Why, and for Whom," 76.
[11] Schwiebert, *Knowledge*, 114–21, van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*, 310–25.
[12] Schwiebert, *Knowledge*, 71–72.
[13] Kurt Niederwimmer, "Kirche als Diaspora," *ET* 41 (1981): 294 notes that ἐκκλησία in *Did* 10:5 is the whole community instead of the assembly of the *Didache* community itself as in 4:14.
[14] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 149–52.
[15] Billig and Tajfel, "Social Categorization," 49.

their motivation to identify with the group is strengthened. Moreover, the Eucharistic prayers express a shift "from Israel to the church, from the temple to the community."[16] This shift is especially important for a community that consists of both Jewish and Gentile Christians, since it evens out the original distinction between Jews and Gentiles.[17] Thus, Jewish and Gentile Christians in the community are recategorized into a shared social identity. This helps to establish cohesiveness within the community.

The people-of-God identity is also conveyed in the church order section. The instructions for supporting community leaders and fellow Christians are based on the understanding of the community as the heir of God's covenant with Israel. This is most clearly seen in *Did* 13, where the community's offering to prophets and teachers is modeled after the offering of first-fruits to priests (13:3). Moreover, the exhortation for reconciliation is also given on the basis of the community's being the people-of-God and its duty to offer pure sacrifice to God (*Did* 14).[18] Particularly worth noticing is the quotation of Mal 1:11, 14 in *Did* 14:3. In the writings of the early church, Mal 1:10–14 is used frequently, and mostly to support the new Christian ritual observance and to distinguish it from that of the old covenant.[19] In *Did* 14, such an argument is not overtly clear. However, the emphasis on "every place and time" (παντὶ τόπῳ καὶ χρόνῳ) and "among the nations" (ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσι) shift the focus of God's promise from Israel and the holy land to the community which consists of both Jewish and Gentile Christians, spread across geographical locations. Hence the community's shared identity as the people-of-God is implicitly stressed in this OT quotation.

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[16] Reed, "Hebrew Epic," 221.

[17] It should be noted that the distinction between Jewish and Gentile Christians are not completely eliminated in the *Didache*, since Jewish Christians are not forbidden to continue in keeping the Torah, while the Gentile Christians are not forced to follow Jewish practices. According to Esler, preserving the identity of individual subgroups while recategorizing them into a common social identity is important, since otherwise the subgroups will fell threatened and thus resist the recategorization. See Esler, *Conflict and Identity*, 30–33.

[18] Draper, "Pure Sacrifice," 247.

[19] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 198–99. Niederwimmer quotes Justin *Dial*. 28.5; 41.2; 116.3; 117.1 and 4; Irenaeus *Adv. haer*. 4.17.5–6; Tertullian *Adv. Marc.* 3.22.6; 4.1.8; *Adv. Iud*. 5.4, 7; Clement of Alexandria *Strom.* 5.14, 136.2–3 as examples. Collins also affirms that the NT as well as the early church fathers understood the Eucharist in term of peace offerings. See C. John Collins, "The Eucharist as Christian Sacrifice: How Patristic Authors Can Help Us Read the Bible," *WTJ* 66 (2004): 2–10.

In summary, the emphasis on the community's identity as people-of-God is the foundation of the *Didache*'s group maintenance strategy. It provides a common ingroup identity for all group members, and hence enhances feelings of status and power among them.[20] Establishing this social identity, the document provides a motivation for community members to conform to the group norms.[21] This identity is partly continuous with Israel's identity as God's chosen people, but also transformed so that both Jewish and Gentile Christians can be equally incorporated into one common identity. This identity also connotes a future as promised by God, a shared destiny of all group members. Furthermore, in case of conflict occurring among the community, this common identity provides the disputants with equal status as a basis of conflict resolution.

6.1.2 Christology

Closely related to the identity as people-of-God is the Christology in the *Didache*, for it is Jesus who makes possible the Christians' acquiring of this identity. At first sight, the *Didache* does not seem to have a high Christology, since Jesus is described as the servant (παῖς) of God (10:3), a description also applied to David. However, Niederwimmer correctly observes that the term reflects old liturgical traditions, which stresses the role of Jesus as the eschatological mediator of salvation and as revealer of God's gifts, who is related to David by a schema of promise and fulfillment.[22] Hence, even though there is no explicit high Christological proclamation, Jesus is no less the centre of identity formation for the *Didache* community. Ekenberg asserts that the organic unity between Christ and the church is underlined by the metaphor "the holy vine of David"(9:1), and the unity of the church is highlighted by the prayer "gather [your church] from the four winds, into the kingdom which you have prepared for it." (10:5).[23] This also marks the community's eschatological hope, based on its identity in Christ. This common destiny of the whole community provides a sense of interdependence, hence reinforces the common social identity of the group.

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[20] Dovidio, "Bridging," 10.
[21] Hogg and Abrams, *Social Identifications*, 171–75.
[22] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 147–48.
[23] Ekenberg, "Jewish Believers," 646. The phrase "the holy vine of David" invites many discussions on its interpretation. For a summary, see Claussen, "Eucharist," 152–53.

Another related issue about the Christology in the *Didache* is the lack of reference to Jesus' death and resurrection. It has even been argued upon the absence of the words of institution that the rituals in *Did* 9–10 should not be taken as the Eucharist.[24] However, as Mazza correctly argues, the meal in the *Didache* is a Jewish ritual meal done in the memory of Jesus. Therefore, even if the meal is not "the Eucharist" in the later institutional sense, the crucial elements of the Eucharist were already there. The Christological elements do not rely on the institution formula, but on the participants' self-understanding of their action, which is done according to Jesus' command.[25] When the community performs the rituals and other teachings of the *Didache*, "Jesus' words and actions are remembered, repeated and re-enacted because they define the group's social identity as the church waiting to be gathered into the Father's kingdom."[26] In other words, the memory of Jesus is transmitted in the actions of the believers, even if it is not done plainly in words.

Therefore, the Christology in the *Didache*, though not much expounded, is nevertheless essential for the establishment of social identity for the community. The community's rituals and teachings transmit the Jesus traditions, which provide a social memory that shapes the community's self-identity as people-of-God. Jesus' teachings and actions become the prototype of the group, which defines and embodies the group norms. The teachings of Jesus also provide the utmost authority that supports the unity of the community, especially in cases when there is disruption among them.

6.1.3 Group Norms

The *Didache*'s most prominent way of group maintenance is by defining and inculcating the group norms. The *Didache* contains a wide range of instructions: from general ethical admonitions; to procedures of rituals; to specific regulations on community life. These instructions articulate acceptable and unacceptable behaviours, and thus help to maintain order within the community.[27] Two governing principles

[24] See for example Wengst, *Didache*, 43–56. See also the discussion above in section 5.3.3.
[25] Mazza, "*Didache* 9–10," 289–99. See also Lange, "Liturgy Redefining Life," 209–10.
[26] Williams, "Social Memory," 38.
[27] Elliott, *Home for the Homeless*, 111 observes that internal order and discipline are essential for group solidarity.

may be noted from these regulations, namely, the concern for conflict reduction and the encouragement of reciprocity within the group.[28] The former can be seen in the emphasis on reconciliation (*Did* 1:3; 2:7; 4:3; 14:2), while the latter is seen in the stress on generosity in supporting fellow Christians (*Did* 1:5; 4:5–8; 12:1–2; 13:3–4). Believers are modeled into a harmonious community through repeatedly learning and practicing the teachings. Moreover, potentially disintegrative normative claims are harmonized by the instructions.[29] This is essential for maintaining the solidarity of the group by avoiding schism due to different teachings and practices. In so doing, the *Didache* functions as a third-party imposing itself on possible disputants among the community. In order to ensure the authority that is necessary for an imposed third-party, it appeals to the authority of the teaching of the Lord through the twelve apostles. Besides the title of the document, this authority is again emphasized in the exhortations to honour as the Lord those who teach in accordance with the standard of the *Didache* (4:1; 11:2, 4; 15:2).[30] Hence the authority is transferred to those accepted leaders, who then serve the role of maintaining the unity of the community. Such legitimization of authority is especially important for the early church, since there was no recourse to other social forces for maintaining the stability of the group.[31]

Besides regulating external behaviours of the members, the group norms articulated in the document also contribute to strengthening the ingroup unity of the community through reinforcing the members' social identity. Several aspects of the *Didache* serve this end. First, Syreeni observes that the *Didache* has a "tendency to preserve an *undifferentiated* view of the community as a corporate entity."[32] This helps to generate a common ingroup identity, which would in turn generate ingroup bias and promote cooperation among group members according to social identity

[28] Kloppenborg, "Use of the Synoptics," 127 observes these two principles in the *sectio evangelica*. However, they can also be seen as governing principles for the whole teaching of the *Didache*.
[29] Henderson, "*Didache* and Orality," 292–93.
[30] Milavec, "When, Why, and for Whom," 67.
[31] DeSilva, *Letter to the Hebrews*, 19.
[32] Syreeni, "Two Ways Teaching," 89. Emphasis original.

theory.[33] Hence it provides an important basis for the solidarity of the group and for conflict resolution in case rift occurs among the group.

Second, the *Didache* invokes God as the supreme prototypical exemplar for the community and gives members motivation to conform to the norms (eg. *Did* 1:5; 4:7).[34] Hence, the ethical instructions are based on the people-of-God identity of the community, and in turn reinforce this identity by helping members to follow God's demand. Moreover, by giving a transcendent meaning to the group norms, the *Didache* contributes to increase group members' commitment, since submission to a transcendent authority is an important factor of commitment.[35]

Third, the moral teachings of the *Didache* set both Jewish and Gentile Christians under the same ethical demand. On the one hand, the teachings contain admonitions directed particularly against pagan cultures and practices. These indicate the radical alteration in behaviour and commitments that Gentile converts are expected to make in order to be accepted into the community.[36] On the other hand, Jewish Christians are also required to submit to these instructions and avoid falling into the error of the pagans. Hence, the moral teachings of the *Didache* help to eliminate the differences between Jewish and Gentile Christians by subjecting both to the same standard. This again contributes to the establishment of a common social identity, and hence promotes the solidarity of the group.

Fourth, the *Didache* emphasizes the requirements for the community leaders. Authentic prophets are to show the way of the Lord in their behaviours (11:8, 10); Bishops and deacons must have characteristics worthy of the Lord (15:1). These requirements try to ensure the leaders to be in accordance with the prototypes of the community in the standard of God, who is the supreme prototypical exemplar. This is essential for maintaining a stable leadership in the community, since "to be seen as displaying leadership in a given context a person needs to be maximally

[33] Gaertner et. al., "Common Ingroup Identity," 5–10.
[34] Social identity theories suggest that the motivation for conforming to group norms does not only come from external pressure, but also from the individual's need to identity with the prototype of the group. See Hogg and Reid, "Social Identity," 12–13.
[35] Kanter, *Commitment*, 73–74.
[36] van de Sandt, "Redefining Jewish Identity," 251.

representative of the shared social identity and consensual position of the group."[37] These prototypical leaders could then become models that express the positive distinctiveness needed for the members' identification with the group. Conversely, the standard set for leaders can also prevent unworthy people from occupying leadership positions. This helps to avoid the dissonance among group members caused by witnessing an ingroup member violating the value of the group, and hence preventing the social identity of group members being weakened.

Fifth, by regulating the public life of the community such as the performance of rituals (*Did* 7–10) and the treatment of leaders (*Did* 11–15), the *Didache* provides common life experiences for group members.[38] These common experiences can give a sense of solidarity, which will form a concrete basis for the shared social identity of the community.[39] Moreover, by participating together in these actions, a need of cooperation between members will be generated. This would strengthen the community's motivation of maintaining its own harmony and members will be more motivated to reconcile when conflict arises.

Finally, the *Didache* provides concessions for members falling short of the community standard. This is most clearly expressed in the exhortation in 6:2, where Christians who cannot bear "the entire yoke of the Lord" are allowed and encouraged to do what they can. It has been argued above that the entire yoke of the Lord refers to the moral teachings in the Two Ways section, which represents Jesus' interpretation of the law.[40] Such an interpretation implies that the same standard is required of both Jews and Gentiles. The reality that Christians will sometimes violate the instructions is acknowledged, while the *Didache* endorses the process of learning, practicing and struggling before Christians become perfect at the end (16:2). Furthermore, the commands to confess one's faults before the Eucharist (4:14; 14:1) and to correct one another (15:3) also imply the possibility of members violating the group norms. However, confessing the faults within the community, indicating

[37] Haslem, *Psychology in Organizations*, 66.
[38] In particular, Lange observes that liturgies provide the *Didache* community with a way of actualizing the community relationships. See Lange, "Liturgy Redefining Life," 225. More about the significance of rituals in reinforcing the ingroup bonding will be discussed below in section 6.1.8.
[39] Kanter, *Commitment*, 72–73.
[40] See above section 5.4.2.

repentance of the members at fault, allows them to be still accepted in the group. This degree of flexibility in the group norms is crucial for preventing the feelings of frustration arising when members perceive themselves falling short of the group standard, which may dissuade them from identifying with the group.

In summary, the group norms conveyed by the detailed instructions in the *Didache* help to reduce possible tensions in the community and encourage reciprocity among community members. The group norms are based upon, and in turn reinforce the community's identity as the people-of-God. By submitting to the norms set forth in the *Didache*, all members of the community, Jews and Gentiles alike, are given a common ingroup identity. This helps to eliminate rifts within the community. Furthermore, by sharing a community life according to this group norm, the social identity of members is further reinforced by common life experience. This common community life also generates a motivation for cooperation, which helps to resolve conflict between members or subgroups. However, some flexibility is allowed in the group norms, so that members falling short of the standard would not so easily feel frustrated and distance themselves from the group. All these aspects of the *Didache* contribute to reinforcing the ingroup bonding within the community.

6.1.4 The Goal of Perfection

Malina asserts that proceeding from establishing norms to carrying out the purpose of the group is an essential step in group formation.[41] The instructions in the *Didache* have an ultimate goal, that is, to lead the community into perfection. The *Didache* is aware of the fact that most Christians, perhaps even all of them, are not yet perfect (6:2), but it envisions them becoming perfect at the eschaton (16:2). Hence, the concept of perfection in the *Didache* involves both a moral sense and an eschatological sense. Among the four occurrences of the words τέλειος or τελειόω in the document, the first two (1:4, 6:2) clearly has a moral sense, while the last two (10:5, 16:2) are more likely to carry an eschatological sense, though the moral sense

[41] Bruce J. Malina, "Early Christian Groups: Using Small Group Formation Theory to Explain Christian Organizations," in *Modelling Early Christianity*, ed. Philip F. Esler (London: Routledge, 1995), 104–5.

is not absent.[42] Moreover, the second person plural τελειωθῆτε in 16:2 indicates that not only individual Christians, but the whole church is to achieve perfection at the end. Hence, perfection is not only an aspect of personal ethic, but also the common goal of the whole community.

The goal of perfection is a long-term one, which can only be achieved through the work of God himself.[43] This eschatological reward of perfection promotes members' adherence to the community, as rewards and costs constitute an essential factor for commitment.[44] However, Christians are also required to take an active part in pursuing this goal by conforming to the teaching of the Lord and by gathering frequently in the community. The community is joined together in this common destiny of perfection. Hence the goal of perfection provides the Christians an interdependence of fate, which is an important component of social identity.[45] It helps to give a sense of solidarity to community members, since they are heading to the same destination.

Furthermore, the community itself is essential for the pursuit of the goal of perfection. In 4:2 the believers are exhorted to "seek out day by day the faces of the saints" (ἐκζητήσεις δὲ καθ' ἡμέραν τὰ πρόσωπα τῶν ἁγίων), which in light of 4:1 would mean the leaders that teach the word of God, so that they may "rest upon their words" (ἐπαναπαῇς τοῖς λόγοις αὐτῶν). The verb ἐπαναπαύομαι refers not only to finding peace of heart,[46] but also to a sense of dependence.[47] In the context of the Two Ways teachings, it indicates that the words of the teachers are the guidance and support that Christians need for pursuing perfection. Then in 16:2, the goal of perfection is given as the reason for the exhortation to "assemble frequently, seeking those things fitting to your soul" (πυκνῶς δὲ συναχθήσεσθε ζητοῦντες τὰ ἀνήκοντα ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν). It shows again that the support of the community is essential for

[42] Niederwimmer interprets the perfection in 10:5 as the unity of the church, while in 16:2 it means the perseverance of faith. See Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 160, 216. However, these meanings should not be taken as mutually exclusive.
[43] In 10:5, the church is to be perfected by God. The passive in 16:2 also indicates God's role in the perfection of the church.
[44] Kanter, *Commitment*, 71–72.
[45] Dovidio, "Bridging," 10–11.
[46] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 106.
[47] LSJ s.v. ἐπαναπαύομαι. This is the sense of the verb in Rom 2:17.

the perfection of Christians. Khomych further argues that the adverb πυκνῶς should be taken to mean "in unity," expressing the manner of the gathering rather than its frequency.[48] This would further highlight the importance of the unity of the community for the goal of perfection, and hence motivate group members to conform to the group standard.[49] This emphasis on community support is beneficial for maintaining group solidarity. Sociological studies have observed that when there are negative group experiences, community support from important group members helps to reduce dissonance.[50] In particular, results from social-scientific experiments have shown that

> the level of cognitive dissonance experienced by participants would be dependent on whether they had behavioral support for failing to act in accordance with their beliefs, but only when that support emanated from a salient in-group. Specifically, we expected behavioral support to be more effective at reducing levels of dissonance for those individuals who share a salient common in-group identity with the source of that information[51]

On the contrary, "a lack of behavioral support from a salient in-group was associated with greater attitude change and reduced levels of group identification."[52] Thus, by urging believers to seek community support towards perfection, the *Didache* contributes to strengthen the ingroup cohesiveness.

Therefore, the goal of perfection is an essential factor in the *Didache*'s group maintenance strategy. It is closely connected to the people-of-God identity of the community, since it is God's will that his people should be perfect.[53] This shared destiny of the community is one of the core elements of their common social identity. It provides a common goal for the whole community, and hence motivates the members to conform to the group norms and highlights the importance of attaching to the community. Furthermore, the goal of perfection also motivates the community to provide support for individual members. This helps to maintain their adherence to

[48] Khomych, "*Didache* 16:2," 126–39. The word πυκνῶς, besides meaning frequency, can also convey a sense of density or unity of elements within an entity. See LSJ, s.v. πυκνῶς. However, the two meanings of the word need not be mutually exclusive as Khomych seems to assume.
[49] Leon Festinger, "Informal Social Communication," *PsyRev* 57 (1950): 271–82.
[50] Festinger, *Cognitive Dissonance*, 188–96.
[51] McKimmie et. al., "Reduction of Cognitive Dissonance," 217.
[52] Ibid., 221.
[53] Such a concept is attested in both the OT and the NT. See Gen 17:1; Deut 18:13; Matt 5:48; Jas 1:4.

the group. Moreover, the hope of being perfected by God at the end constitutes an element of positive distinctiveness for the Christian community. Hence, it could attract members to identify with the group. In short, the goal of perfection is crucial for the establishing and strengthening the cohesiveness of the *Didache* community.

6.1.5 Eschatology

Social identity contains a temporal element that involves past, present and future dimensions. Expectations for the future, connoting an interdependence of fate, form an important factor for building social identity and maintaining the stability of a group.[54] Sociological studies suggest that understanding of the future can have several significant functions for a group. These include justifying the group's present action, illuminating or criticizing the present, underpinning the sense of self and its survival, and altering the group's relationship to its natural, social and cultural environment.[55]

Eschatological expectations in the *Didache* provide a framework for the early Christians for explaining the reason and purpose of their present experiences.[56] By interpreting the present troubles through the lens of eschatological expectations, the *Didache* consolidates the belief that the community has a favorable future, which is shared by all members. This promotes a climate of cooperative interdependence, which enhances mutual trust and support within the group and hence increases members' commitment.[57] Moreover, the *Didache* warns about an eschatological testing, which has already dawned on the community and will decide the final destiny of the members.[58] It indicates that the promise of life is something which may

[54] Tajfel et. al., "Social Categorization," 152–53.
[55] Sandra Wallman, "Introduction: Contemporary Futures," in *Contemporary Futures: Perspectives from Social Anthropology*, ed. Sandra Wallman, ASAM 30 (London: Routledge, 1992), 16.
[56] Taylor, "Social Nature of Conversion," 135.
[57] Folger et. at., *Working through Conflict*, 208–10.
[58] The theme of testing is expressed in *Did* 16:3–7. Milavec argues that the fire in *Did* 16:5 has a double function of destructive fire for the unfaithful and purgatorial fire that purifies those who endure. See Aaron Milavec, "The Saving Efficacy of the Burning Process in *Didache* 16:5," in *The* Didache *in Context*, ed. Clayton N. Jefford (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 131–55. However, such interpretation is correctly refuted as not supported by the text of the *Didache*. See for example Varner, "*Didache* Apocalypse," 316–17 and Verheyden, "Eschatology," 207.

be lost (*Did* 16:6–8).[59] To pass the test, members have to persevere in their faith. In the context of the *Didache*, the way to persevere is to pursue perfection through committing to its teachings, which consist not only of personal moral instructions, but also different aspects of community life.[60] This underlies the importance of obedience to the preceding instructions.[61] Hence, the eschatological expectation of testing in the *Didache* serves to motivate community members to conform to the group norms.

In the *Didache*, the solidarity of the community is closely connected to its eschatological expectations. The unity of the church envisioned in the eschatological hope (*Did* 9–10) informs how the community should live at the present. On the one hand, since the whole church is destined to be gathered by God into one people, members would be expecting their present community to reflect this reality to a certain extent. The eschatology of the *Didache* thus implies that members should seek cohesiveness in the community. On the other hand, rifts in the community are perceived as threats to the community on its way to receive God's eschatological gifts. To avoid this threat, the community has to gather often (16:2) and to resolve their quarrels in proper ways (*Did* 14–15). In short, eschatological expectations provide strong reasons for the community to maintain its solidarity and harmony.

6.1.6 Resolving Disputes

To maintain strong group coherence, it is necessary to resolve conflicts among the group and reconcile members in dispute. The *Didache* acknowledges the existence of conflicts among the community, and hence exhorts the community

[59] Jonathan A. Draper, "Walking the Way of Life or the Way of Death in the Present Existence as the Beginning of Eschatological Life or Death in the Renewed Earthly Kingdom: The Rationale for the Limitation of the Resurrection to the Righteous Departed in Didache 16,6-8," in *Resurrection of the Dead: Biblical Traditions in Dialogue*, eds. Geert van Oyen and Tom Shepherd, BETL 249 (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 2012), 398.
[60] Khomych, "*Didache* 16.2," 129.
[61] Brandenburger argues that apocalyptic imageries do not necessarily promote enactment of law in the present. See Egon Brandenburger, *Markus 13 und die Apokalyptik*, FRLANT 134 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984), 135–39. However, in view of the heavy concern for ethics and practical issues in the *Didache*, it is obvious that the eschatological ending serves to motivate obedience.

members "to supportively judge and to boldly reconcile."[62] Some of the admonitions in the Two Ways section show concerns for smooth relationships among the community. These include the threefold command to reprove, pray for and love others (2:7); the warning against grumbling, self-will and thinking evil of others, which lead to slander (3:6); the prohibition of causing division and the exhortation to reconcile those in quarrel (4:3); the warning against partiality (4:3); and the command to confess one's faults in the assembly (4:14). Of particular interest is the saying in 1:3. This verse contains a command to love one's enemies parallel to synoptic traditions. However, the final reason given, "and you will not have any enemy" (καὶ οὐχ ἕξετε ἐχθρόν), is not found in the gospels. This reasoning seems unsound and its exact meaning is debated.[63] Nevertheless, it seems clear from this saying that a completely harmonious situation is envisioned, at least within the community itself if not for the relationship between the group and larger society. This is consistent with the *Didache*'s idea of perfection, which contains the aspect of unity of the church (10:5).

The teachings on community relations and reconciliation are further expressed in the instructions in *Did* 14–15. In 14:1, the Eucharist gathering is considered as a concrete occasion for the confession of faults and reconciliation, as believers are told to confess their faults before participating in the ritual. The passage grounds these commands on the identity of the community as the people-of-God, who are to offer to God pure sacrifices in their thanksgivings. Hence, community harmony is considered as an essential part of group identity.[64] This also highlights the correlation between reconciliation and a common social identity. Studies on conflicts observe that a common ingroup identity can be established only when members are reconciled to each other.[65] Conversely, a transcendent identity can reinforce reconciliation.[66] Therefore, placing the confession of faults and

[62] Aaron Milavec, "The Purifying Confession of Failings Required by the Didache's Eucharistic Sacrifice," *BTB* 33 (2003): 74.
[63] See for example Audet, *Didachè*, 265 and Niederwimer, *Didache*, 75.
[64] Draper observes that the relationship of confession, purity, meal, spiritual sacrifice and community discipline expressed in *Did* 14 is similar to what is reflected in 1QS. See Draper "Pure Sacrifice," 242.
[65] Bar-Siman-Tov, *From Conflict Resolution*, 119.
[66] Ibid., 119. However, Bar-Siman-Tov observes that a transcendent identity is not necessary for reconciliation.

reconciliation in a context of community Eucharist, which is an important expression of the community's special relation to God, would be a sound strategy for reinforcing ingroup bonding in the *Didache* community.

Further instructions for maintaining community relations are given in 15:3. To enhance confession of faults and reconciliation, members are required to correct one another and to avoid contact with those refusing to repent. These commands render the community itself the authority to deal with ingroup conflicts. The mutuality of correction also gives members equal status, which is important for conflict resolution according to the contact hypothesis.[67] These instructions also show intimate concern for those members at fault, since the main purpose of the actions is to induce offenders to repent.[68] However, the judicial perspective is also present.[69] In case of conflict arising, the community is to take necessary procedures to restore harmony. By taking such disciplinary measures, the *Didache* seeks to establish "a caring community of like-minded individuals."[70] As members keep confessing and repenting from their faults and reconciled to each other, the distance between them, both in terms of thought and practice, will be shortened, and hence ingroup bonding can be strengthened. Moreover, the command to correct one another "not in anger but in peace" (15:3) recalls the admonitions about meekness in 3:7–10. Confessing one's faults and correcting one another in the community provide concrete instances for members to practice this moral teaching and reminds them of the goal of perfection they are to pursue (6:2).

In summary, resolution of conflict is essential for the cohesiveness of the community. Conversely, strong ingroup bonding helps to resolve conflict among community members, since social bonds tend to encourage yielding and problem solving.[71] Some of the admonitions in the Two Ways section of the *Didache* are directed to maintain harmony and unity in the community, while the instructions for confession, reconciliation and mutual correction in *Did* 14–15 provide the setting for

[67] Allport, *Nature of Prejudice*, 281.
[68] van de Sandt, "Two Windows," 178–80.
[69] Draper "Pure Sacrifice," 234–37.
[70] Milavec, "Purifying Confession," 69.
[71] Pruitt and Kim, *Social Conflict*, 134.

the practice of these admonitions. These regulations show the *Didache*'s stress in smooth relationships and the important roles of the ingroup for resolving conflict. This indicates the *Didache*'s adherence to the harmony model of conflict resolution. Furthermore, harmony of community is closely related to the people-of-God identity of the community. The special identity of the community before God necessitates a harmonious ingroup relation. On the other hand, the sense of common identity motivates reconciliation among group members. Therefore, community practice of reconciliation is inseparable from the *Didache*'s overall strategy of social-identity building.

6.1.7 The Poor in the Community

Another issue that affects the ingroup relation of the *Didache* community is the support of the poor among them. Milavec observes that teaching about economic issues occupies over one-third of the Way of Life.[72] The instructions on supporting the poor offer a means of redistribution of resources in the community.[73] Such measures provide the community members with the basic necessities for living. However, these economic instructions have more significance for the cohesiveness of the community than merely providing a safety net for the poorest members of the community.[74] Situated in a society where the classes of rich and poor are sharply divided, the social contradiction represented by this class structure can be a danger that threatens to split the community.[75] To avoid such danger and to promote solidarity between members from different social strata, the *Didache* establishes the equality of all community members on the basis that they are already sharers of God's immortal gifts, and hence should also be sharers of God's material gifts.[76] God is depicted as the ideal patron who gives freely to everyone (1:5). Draper correctly observes that this redefines the patron-client relationship of the Greco-Roman society, which favours those who can give back more than others can.[77] Following the example of God, the community members are to treat each other equally. Moreover,

[72] Milavec, *Didache*, 176.
[73] Draper, "Moral Economy," 7.
[74] Ibid., 4, quoting Moxnes, *Economy of the Kingdom*, 39.
[75] Gilmore, "Anthropology," 186.
[76] Draper, "Moral Economy," 6. The spiritual equality of the community is most clearly expressed in the rituals of the community. See below section 6.1.8.
[77] Draper, "Moral Economy," 4.

community members are urged to associate with the just and humble instead of the highly ones (3:9). This exhortation helps to even up the power imbalance between the rich and the poor, by regarding the poor as the preferred prototypical exemplars of the community. Therefore, although the *Didache* does not explicitly identity the poor as God's chosen as in Jas 2:5, the counter cultural stance, which requests the adoption of humility of the poor in one's attitude towards God and towards others,[78] is not absent in the *Didache*.

The economic instructions of the *Didache* reinforce the solidarity of the community in several ways. First, the willingness of the community to support members in difficult conditions is necessary to maintain the loyalty and trust of its adherents.[79] By caring for the members exploited by the hardship of the society, the *Didache* community provides positive group experiences for its members, especially those lowly ones. This increases the positive distinctiveness of the group, and thus enhances members' identification with the group. Second, by exhorting members to practice giving and sharing, the *Didache* serves to break down the instinct to promote oneself over others.[80] This moderates the spirit of competition among the community, and hence contributes to maintaining its harmony. Third, the economic teaching also has implications for the leadership of the community. On the one hand, the leaders of the *Didache* community are prohibited to strive for personal gains (11:6, 12) and they are to be dependent on the support of the community. In this way the leaders embody the prototypical values of the group through a life-style of the poor. On the other hand, the leaders also have to take up the responsibility of caring for the poor.[81] This helps to counterbalance the privileges enjoyed by the leaders, and hence reduces the chance of envies arising among community members. This in turn promotes harmony and cohesiveness of the community.

Therefore, the concern about the poor in the *Didache* is not only a matter of logistic of distribution of resources. It also helps to strengthen a common social

[78] Bauckham observes such a counter cultural stance in James. See Bauckham, *James*, 193–96.
[79] DeSilva, *Letter to the Hebrews*, 147–48.
[80] Milavec, "When, Why, and for Whom," 72.
[81] The prophets, when speaking in spirit, may ask the community to give money or other things to those in need (12:12). Moreover, de Halleux, "Ministers," 313 suggests that the gentleness required of bishops and deacons appropriates them for the task of defending the poor and the oppressed.

identity for community members by establishing equality among members and by promoting the status of the poor into a prototype for the group in a counter-cultural way, so that the social contradiction between rich and poor may be weakened or even eliminated. In this way, the *Didache* contributes to the reinforcement of ingroup bonding of the community.

6.1.8 Rituals

In the discussions above, some of the functions of rituals for reinforcing group cohesiveness have been noted already, but it would be helpful to highlight again and supplement these particular aspects of community rituals in the *Didache*. Generally speaking, the practice of community rituals is an important medium to express the worldview, values and goals of the community. When group members participate in community rituals, their inner experiences are shaped in concord with fellow members.[82] Hence, rituals can be deployed as a social strategy for social control and social communication.[83] Moreover, when ritual practices are repeated over time, the values embedded in the rituals will be installed into the members as a habitual posture, so that the ethos of the community is inculcated.[84] Therefore, ritual practices play an important role in maintaining the distinctive identity of a group by enabling individual members "to share a common view of reality and confirm each other's assumptions about the nature and purpose of life."[85] By participating in the rituals, community members are joined together in their experience of the world, their perception of life and their expectation of the common destiny of the group.

In the *Didache*, one sees that the symbolic language of rituals provides a way of "actualizing the evangelical relationships to be maintained in the community."[86] The various rituals of the Christian community, emphasizing the life bestowed by God unto believers, signify the gift of salvation which is not only transcendental and

[82] Thomas L. Longenecker, "Liturgia and *Didache*: Teaching in the Early Church," *BLT* 41 (1996): 58.
[83] Catherine M. Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (Oxford: OUP, 1992), 89.
[84] Schwiebert, *Knowledge*, 81–82, Bell, *Ritual Theory*, 19. See Jonathan Schwiebert "Pray 'In This Way': Formalized Speech in Didache 9–10," in *The Didache: A Missing Piece of the Puzzle in Early Christianity*, eds. J.A. Draper and C.N. Jefford, ECIL 14 (Atlanta: SBL, 2015), 189–207 for a further discussion on the significance of the prescribed prayers in the *Didache*.
[85] van de Sandt, "Redefining Jewish Identity," 247.
[86] Lange, "Liturgy Redefining Life," 225.

futuristic, but already in possession of the congregation and experienced in the midst of the community.[87] The rituals also stress the incorporation of believers into a new community of the people-of-God, as signified by the utterance and continued indwelling of the name of God in the baptized, highlighted in the Eucharist prayers, and symbolized by the eating of a holy meal.[88] Hence, the repeated performance of rituals reinforces the common social identity of the community and increases the sense of solidarity among community members.

Mary Douglas observes that the culture of a community is transmitted by ritual forms, which in turn shape and reinforce the culture of that community:

> It will help us to understand religious behaviour if we can treat ritual forms, like speech forms, as transmitters of culture, which are generated in social relations and which, by their selections an emphases, exercise a constraining effect of social behaviour.[89]

> The code [of rituals] enables a given pattern of values to be enforced and allows members to internalize the structure of the group and its norms in the very process of interaction.[90]

Moreover, the strong emotional effect stimulated by rituals can convert "the obligatory into the desirable" within the participants.[91] Hence, by participating in the rituals, the self-understanding of the members are continually shaped in conformity to the group values, and thus their attitudes and actions would be transformed towards the group norms.[92] Therefore, rituals can be an effective way of ethical teaching for community members.[93] In particular, the baptism ritual can effect a powerful change in the converts' perception of themselves and their relation to old and new social relationships.[94] Hence, new identities as well as new standards of social behaviours are given to the converts through the experience of baptism. These effects of baptism on the converts are then consolidated by the periodic performance

[87] Vööbus, *Liturgical Traditions*, 123.
[88] Draper, "Ritual Process," 153.
[89] Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 42.
[90] Ibid., 77.
[91] Turner, *Forest of Symbols*, 30.
[92] Draper, "Ritual Process," 126. McGowan, "Rethinking," 179 further observes that meals in the ancient Mediterranean were a crucial medium for creating and maintaining identity.
[93] Longenecker, "Liturgia and *Didache*," 60.
[94] DeSilva, *Letter to the Hebrews*, 42, Milavec, "Why, When and for Whom," 76.

of the Eucharist and other rituals such as fasting and prayer. By giving instructions on rituals after the ethical teachings in the Two Ways section, the *Didache* provides a way for reinforcing the ethical norm of the community.

The performance of rituals also provides a concrete way for uniting the community. Applying Bernstein's study on social learning, Douglas asserts that ritual is a kind of highly coded language, which is restricted in the sense that it only offers a small range of alternative forms. Such restricted code unites the speaker to his kin and to his local community.[95] As members use the same form of restricted language, a sense of togetherness is conveyed to and felt by the participants. In case when local communities have discrepancy in ritual practices, the instructions in the *Didache* could also function to keep the local communities in line with the authoritative teaching.[96] At the same time, concessions are given when practical reasons prevents local communities from following the ideal performance of rituals, such as the concession on baptismal water (*Did* 7). Such concessions provide a basis for the unity of the whole community when some differences are unavoidable in ritual performance. Moreover, the ritual instructions in the *Didache* probably represent "the remnants of important rituals and instructions that were well-respected in antiquity,"[97] which keep the *Didache* community connected with its history. On the other hand, rituals in the *Didache* also point the community to its future destiny, as most clearly expressed in the Eucharist prayers (9:4; 10:5). The unity of the community is forcefully expressed by symbolic actions such as sharing the same loaf (9:4).[98] Rituals thus serve as a form of social memory that embodies the temporal aspect of a community's social identity.[99] The participants of the rituals are united not only with contemporary members, but also with past and future members as a continuous community through time.

Another way that rituals strengthen ingroup bonding is by providing shared time and social experiences. O'Loughlin observes that

[95] Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, 54–55, quoting Basil Bernstein, "A Social Linguistic Approach to Social Learning," 165.
[96] Pardee, "Visualizing," 84.
[97] Jefford, "Tradition and Witness," 411.
[98] Alikin, *Christian Gathering*, 109.
[99] Olick, "Genre Memories," 381–84.

> [s]haring a common time is a fundamental way that human beings express their solidarities. ... the emphasis of the Didache on shared time not only makes sense in terms of explanation of the structures of practice, but may indicate an awareness that it was only by living with the community and sharing its time and times that the neophyte could learn what it was to be part of the church.[100]

The periodical performance of the rituals as instructed in the *Didache* provides a time structure which consolidates group members' sense of being part of the community. That is part of the reason why the fasting day is mentioned in 8:1. Besides sharing a common time, the rituals also provide a chance and expression for the community's sharing in other aspects of life. This is especially the case for the common meal, which let the members work together to provide for the community.[101] It also provides a concrete occasion for the community to practice caring for the poor among them.[102] Hence, the solidarity of the group is explicitly manifested in the Eucharist meal. Similarly, the instruction to fast together with the baptized before baptism also expresses the solidarity of the community and serves to reinforce the ingroup bonding.[103]

The third way that the ritual instructions in the *Didache* serve to reinforce ingroup bonding is by providing an occasion for mutual confession and reconciliation (14:1–2). By commanding reconciliation as a prerequisite of the Eucharist sacrifice, broken relations can be mended and harmony in the community can be restored.[104] The leaders presiding over the ritual, as well as the instance of the ritual itself, become authorities supporting and enforcing the command of reconciliation. According to Allport's contact hypothesis, support of authority is an essential constituent for successful conflict reduction.[105] Hence, the Eucharist instructions in the *Didache* constitute an important measure for maintaining the cohesiveness of the community.

[100] O'Loughlin, "Missionary Strategy," 83.
[101] Ibid., 84.
[102] Draper, "Moral Economy," 6.
[103] O'Loughlin, "Source for Picturing," 95–98.
[104] Milavec, "Purifying Confession," 74.
[105] Allport, *Nature of Prejudice*, 281.

Therefore, one sees that ritual instructions have crucial roles in the *Didache*'s group maintenance strategies. Rituals consolidate the community's people-of-God identity and transmit the traditions and values of the group. In the language of dynamical systems, rituals help to provide an alternate set of attractors that is needed for a group to change from a conflict situation.[106] Rituals also serve the function of socialization by stimulating emotional effects in the participants, which attracts their conformity to group norms. In addition, community rituals in the *Didache* serve to unite the community through providing a shared time and social structure and concrete instances for mutual reconciliation. All these aspects of ritual instructions help to strengthen the group solidarity of the *Didache* community.

6.1.9 Concluding Summary

Longenecker observes that corporate identity can be understood through the credal beliefs, cult practices and ethical expectations of a people.[107] In the *Didache*, one sees that all these elements are at work in establishing and strengthening the social identity of the community. The basic identity of the group is conveyed in their self-understanding as the people-of-God, an identity they received through Jesus Christ. This self-understanding also connotes an interdependence of fate, since as God's people they are destined to be gathered and perfected as one people in God's kingdom. This identity also exerts ethical demands for the community, as articulated in the moral teaching of the *Didache*, which points to the goal of perfection. Among the ethical demands in the *Didache*, two especially important aspects are the caring for the poor and the prevention and resolution of disputes. These ethical instructions provide practical guidelines for maintaining group cohesiveness as well as defining the norms of the community. In terms of expressing the group identity and values, the ritual instructions in the *Didache* play an essential role. Common participation in the rituals unites the community both in conceptual and practical level. The "story" conveyed in the rituals also provides content for the social identity of group members.

In order to build and maintain ingroup bonding, conflicts in the community have to be resolved. To this end, the regulations in the *Didache* provide the four

[106] See the introduction in section 1.3.1.3.
[107] Longenecker, "Liturgia and *Didache*," 61.

essential constituents for successful conflict reduction according to Allport's model. First, the people-of-God identity, as well as the admonition to associate with the poor instead of the highly ones, provide a basis of equal status. Second, various aspects of community life, such as the support for the leaders and for the poor, as well as the performance of rituals, necessitate the cooperation between members and subgroups. Third, the vision of perfection provides a common goal for the community. Fourth, the *Didache* provides several authorities to support the maintenance of ingroup relations. These include the commands of God, which is expressed in the Gospel; the authority bestowed to community leaders; and the *Didache* itself, which is received as the teaching of the Lord through the twelve apostles.

In terms of conflict models, the *Didache* is a mixture of the harmony model and the regulative model. In accordance to the former, the *Didache* stresses smooth relationships in the group so that their sacrifice to God can be pure. This harmonious relationship is envisioned as a long-term outcome, an aspect of the eschatological perfection of the community. Moreover, confession and reconciliation are to be done under the authority of the community leaders, who are exemplars of the ingroup. On the other hand, the *Didache* provides clear principles, rules and codes of behaviour, which regulate various aspects of individual and community lives. The leaders are also given clearly ascribed roles. These properties of the *Didache* show conformity to the regulative model.

Closely related to the reinforcement of ingroup unity is the sharpening of group boundaries. Polemic with outgroups can enhance ingroup cooperation and cohesiveness. A clear group boundary can also prevent ingroup conflict arising from ambiguity in group norms. Hence maintaining a sharp boundary between the community and outgroups would be an important strategy for group maintenance. How this is handled in the *Didache* will be the focus of the next section.

6.2 Group Boundary

Intergroup relation and intragroup behaviour are two related phenomena. A group's relation with other groups will affect its members' attitude and adherence to the group, and *vice versa*. In particular, when the ingroup is evaluated with respect to

a relevant outgroup, the positivity ascribed to the ingroup is higher than when there is no outgroup to compare with the ingroup.[108] Hence, in order to strengthen the social identity of group members, a usual strategy is to stress the positive distinctiveness of the group relative to other groups. Furthermore, when the solidarity of the ingroup is threatened by rival groups which are attractive to members of the ingroup, it would be necessary to readjust the relationship between the ingroup and the outgroup to prevent the ingroup from disintegrating. This is done on the one hand by legitimizing the social reality constructed by the ingroup,[109] and on the other hand by insulating the ingroup from rival outgroups through the development of behavioral rules.[110] It will be shown below that these are also strategies employed in the *Didache* to enhance the cohesiveness of the Christian community. By emphasizing boundaries between ingroup and outgroups, the *Didache* establishes a ground on which the social identity of the *Didache* community is defined and consolidated.[111] This ground is protected by group norms that promote and manifest separation of ingroup from rival outgroups. Comparisons between ingroup and outgroups that disparage the outgroups and put the ingroup in a positive light would then increase the attraction of the ingroup for members and reduce the threat of rival outgroups. Hence, the cohesiveness of the community is reinforced.

6.2.1 Jesus Tradition

The most fundamental distinction between Christian communities and other groups is the profession of Jesus Christ. The *Didache* community regards Christ as the ultimate revealer of God's will and promises, the supreme teacher of God's law and the Lord who is coming at the end of time. The importance of Christology for the establishment of social-identity of the *Didache* community has been discussed above.[112] It suffices here to make a few further remarks on how the Jesus tradition in the *Didache* serves to define and strengthen the boundary of the community with outsiders.

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[108] Costarelli and Callà, "Cross-Dimension-Ambivalent," 543–54, Wagner and Ward, "Variation of Outgroup Presence," 241–51.
[109] Berger, *Sacred Canopy*, 29–30, Berger and Luckmann, *Social Construction*, 94.
[110] Wilson, "Sect Development," 10–11.
[111] Zangenberg, "Milieu of the Didache," 58.
[112] See above section 6.1.2.

The incorporation of Jesus' teaching in the Two Ways material serves to distinguish the *Didache* community from other groups, especially Jewish groups, that also inherit the Two Ways tradition. Moreover, by placing the *sectio evangelica* (*Did* 1:3–2:1) before other Two Ways materials, the *Didache* emphasizes the priority of the Jesus tradition over the original Two Ways instructions, and hence defines the *Didache* community over against traditional Judaism.[113] On the other hand, the *sectio evangelica* also postulates a great difference between the Christian ethos and that of the Greco-Roman society, with the former expressed as the ideal of perfection (6:2), required of believers in their final salvation (16:2).[114] In contrast, those who do not share the community's profession of Jesus Christ are casted in negative light, since they lack the essential guide that leads to perfection. By following Jesus' authoritative teaching, the *Didache* community shows itself to be distinct from and superior to other groups, both Jewish and Gentile.

The proclamation of Christ in the community rituals, especially in the Eucharist prayers, also serves to emphasize the distinctive superiority of the community as receivers of Christ's gifts. Since only through Christ is the true life and knowledge from God made known, it implies that those not receiving these gifts through Christ are cut off from the fulfillment of God's promises. This separation between ingroup and outgroups is more clearly expressed in the eschatological ending of the *Didache*, in which it is stressed that not everyone will have a share in the resurrection, but only those "holy ones with him" (16:7).[115] Hence, two completely different destinies are portrayed for insiders and outsiders. This sharpens the boundaries defined by the community's profession of Christ. It is strictly an either-or situation. The community of followers of Christ is heading to a final destination in which non-followers have nothing to share.

Further highlighting the importance of the Jesus tradition as boundary marker of the community is the reference to the gospel teachings. Though explicitly

[113] Pardee, "Visualizing," 82–83.
[114] Syreeni, "Two Ways Teaching," 96.
[115] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 225 asserts that the quotation does not come from Matthew, but is taken directly from Zechariah. The *Didache* interprets "the holy ones" as Christians, rather than angels as in the original context of Zechariah or in the Matthew quotation.

mentioned only a few times (8:2; 11:3; 15:3, 4), these appeal to the gospel, whether a Gospel in written form or traditions of gospel teachings, call upon an undisputed authority to promote some form of discrimination between insiders and outsiders concerning social conduct or the fate of humanity.[116] The acceptance of the authority of gospel traditions on the one hand marks community members from outsiders who do not submit to the same authority, and on the other hand motivates members to conform to the norms of the ingroup. Hence, the distinction between ingroup and outgroups is intensified.

Finlan observes that "[i]t is Christology (however embryonic) that signals the Didache community's separation from its ancestral Jewish group."[117] The emphasis on Jesus traditions not only provides a basic definition of the identity of the Christian communities, in the *Didache* such profession of Christ also affirms the positive distinctiveness of the community against outgroups. This is an effective way to reduce intragroup dissonance and to prevent rifts developing within the group.[118] Moreover, when the community is threatened by challenges from outgroups, the superiority of the ingroup highlighted by the Christological perspectives also increases the attraction of the community to its members, thus reducing the danger of members being driven to leave the group. Hence, by stressing the Jesus traditions as an identity marker of the community, the group boundary is fortified, and group cohesiveness is enhanced.

6.2.2 Rituals and Group Boundary

Besides highlighting the community as the receivers of God's gifts through Christ, the community rituals in the *Didache* also serve in other ways to establish the group boundaries between members and outsiders. By participating in the rituals distinctive to the community, boundaries between insiders and outsiders are manifested socially.[119] In particular, since some of the rituals, such as prayers and

[116] Verheyden, "Eschatology," 199.
[117] Finlan, "Identity," 25.
[118] Glasford et. al., "In-Group Identification," 416–20.
[119] van de Sandt, "Redefining Jewish Identity," 264.

fasts, were public acts at the time of the early church,[120] the participation in them creates a public differentiation between the community and other groups.[121] Hence, the distinction between ingroup and outgroups through the practice of the rituals is not only perceived and felt by the participating insiders, but is also recognized by outsiders.

Two other aspects of the ritual instructions in the *Didache* help to sharpen the group boundaries of the community. First, the participants of the rituals are restricted. Those who have not been baptized are forbidden to participate in the community Eucharist (9:5), and those members in dispute with other members and have not been reconciled are also excluded (14:2). These restrictions utilize the notion of purity to enforce the standards of holiness cherished by the community members.[122] Rituals become a continuous reminder for community members to comply with the group norms, which distinguishes the ingroup from the outgroups. Such language of purity also constructs a worldview that organizes the members' perception of reality.[123] By defining the ingroup as pure and those outside the group boundary as impure, a sharp contradiction is placed between ingroup and outgroup, and behaviours and social interactions of group members are shaped accordingly, thus further reinforcing the group boundary.[124] Moreover, the restrictions induces in the participants a sense of centrality to the group. This can cause the ingroup members to be less responsive to the changes in social contexts and more reliant on the social identity of the group.[125] This further reinforces the group boundaries.

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[120] One evidence for the publicity of these actions is Jesus' sayings in Matt 6:1–18, which clearly indicate that the Pharisees were performing them publicly. Moreover, *m.Taan* 2.1 states that Jewish fast days were observed in public in open places. See also the discussion in Draper, "Christian Self-Definition," 233–35.

[121] Draper, "Christian Self-Definition," 234, Wilson, *Related Strangers*, 225.

[122] Milavec, "Purifying Confession," 64. See also Huub van de Sandt, "Baptism and Holiness: Two Requirements Authorizing Participation in the Didache's Eucharist," in *The Didache: A Missing Piece of the Puzzle in Early Christianity*, eds. J.A. Draper and C.N. Jefford, ECIL 14 (Atlanta: SBL, 2015), 139–64.

[123] Berger, *Sacred Canopy*, 9. See also Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 89–90.

[124] Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 1–6. See also the discussion on the connection between knowledge and social life in Florian Znaniecki, "Sociology and Theory of Knowledge," in *The Sociology of Knowledge*, eds. James E. Curtis and John W. Petras (London: Duckworth, 1982), 311–18.

[125] Jolanda Jetten et. al., "On Being Peripheral: Effects of Identity Insecurity on Personal and Collective Self-Esteem," *EJSP* 32 (2002): 106–12.

Second, the community rituals convey a sharp distinction between the current status of believers on the one hand, and their former life, as well as the status of non-believers on the other. The ritual of baptism is the most conspicuous in this respect. It marks a turning point when converts enter into a new network of social relations.[126] It signifies the social death of the former self of the converts and a separation from their former attachments to other communities.[127] These effects of the initiation rite of baptism is then reinforced by the continuous participation in the fasting, prayers and Eucharist of the community. Hence, rituals function to install and strengthen a sense of new life in the participants, which distances them from the culture and life-style they inherited from the socialization in their previous life, and substitutes a new social identity for an old one. The superiority of the new life as conveyed in the rituals also discourages the members from returning to their former status.

In summary, rituals play essential roles in strengthening the group boundaries. The ritual instructions in the *Didache* serve this end by creating a public differentiation between community and rival groups, by restricting the participants of the rituals and thus constructing a contradiction between pure and impure, by increasing participants' sense of centrality to the group, and by distinguishing the current life of the members from their former selves and social relations. Hence, through constant participation in the community rituals, the members are distanced from the influence of outgroups, and continuously drawn towards the ingroup.

6.2.3 Moral Admonitions and Pagan Society

In the *Didache*, one can discern attempts to draw boundaries against several other groups. These include the pagan Gentiles, non-Christian Jewish groups, and swindlers who claim to be members or even leaders of the group. How the *Didache* draw boundaries against these groups deserves a closer examination.

The culture and practices of the pagan Greco-Roman society were continuous challenges to the early community of believers with its roots in Jewish monotheistic

[126] Milavec, "When, Why, and for Whom," 76.
[127] Draper, "Ritual Process," 123–24. See also Mircea Eliade, *Rites and Symbols of Initiation: The Mysteries of Birth and Rebirth* (Putnam, Conn.: Spring Publications, 1994), 115–21.

worldview and moral principles. Moreover, the competition for honour and reputation, which is characteristic of Mediterranean cultures, further highlights the importance of "moral community" for social organization.[128] Therefore, one finds in the *Didache*, like in many NT books, moral instructions directed against Gentile cultures and practices (*Did* 2:2; 3:4; 5:2).[129] These ethical instructions act as boundary markers identifying the members of the church.[130] Admittedly, these moral admonitions are not only directed at Gentiles. In Jewish writings, including the OT itself, there are many moral admonitions that warn Israelites against following Gentile practices that are incompatible with their identity as God's people. However, the pagan society, with its practices of idolatry and deficient moral standards, is still the main target against which the moral instructions are directed. These admonitions set the boundaries between the Christian community and the Gentile society surrounding it.

In the *Didache*, the moral instructions are contained mainly in the Two Ways section. It provides "a framework for understanding the radical alteration in behaviour and commitments that the Gentile convert was expected to make."[131] Being a pre-baptismal catechesis, as it is presented in the *Didache*, it intensifies the "in-group/out-group consciousness" within the elected community.[132] By presenting the two types of behaviours in a dichotomy of the way of life and the way of death, a sharp distinction is made between the ingroup that follows the way of life and the outgroup that is on the way of death, with no middle ground between them. The way of death is further described as "evil and full of curse" (*Did* 5:1). This denigrates the outgroup and produces within community members an emotional effect that discourages them from adhering to such behaviours. The boundary is further reinforced by the regular confession of one's faults in the community (4:14; 14:1), an action that keeps reminding the members the contradiction between the two ways.

[128] Gilmore, "Anthropology," 189.
[129] See the discussion above in section 5.4.3.
[130] Hartin, "Ethics," 301.
[131] van de Sandt, "Redefining Jewish Identity," 251.
[132] M. Jack Suggs, "The Christian Two Ways Tradition: Its Antiquity, Form, and Function," in *Studies in New Testament and Early Christian Literature: Essays in Honor of Allen P. Wikgren*, ed. David E. Aune, NovTSup 33 (Leiden : Brill, 1972), 73.

A sharp boundary against the pagan society was necessary for the early church, since the dominant Greco-Roman society would be continuously posing threats on Christian communities by the attraction of social prosperity on the one hand, and by the intimidation of persecution on deviants on the other hand. In view of this social reality, the cost of Christians' separation from the dominant society is stressed in the *Didache*. This is stated most dramatically in the *sectio evangelica*, where Christians are exhorted to love their enemies who persecute them.[133] Community members are requested to pay this cost of enduring persecution and loving their oppressors, because it defines their identity as distinct from the nations which love only those who love them (1:3). Therefore, the threat of persecution from the society is turned into an essential element of the way of life. Hence, the original negative value of such threats becomes positive, promoting the positive distinctiveness of the group.[134] In this way, the community's boundary with the dominant society is preserved and group cohesiveness is strengthened.

Therefore, the moral instructions in the *Didache* are not merely personal ethical guidelines. They also serve essential functions in reinforcing the community boundaries. The behavioral rules insulate Christian members from pagan cultures and practices. The dichotomy of the Two Ways creates emotional effects as well as nominal boundaries that help to keep the members' distance from the outgroup. Emphasizing that the community is on the way of life legitimizes the social reality of the community under the hardship of persecution. It also affirms the positive distinctiveness of the group by transforming the negative experiences from the dominant society into positive ones. Hence, group members will be less motivated to be drawn towards the dominant society, and hence the distinct identity of the ingroup can be maintained.

6.2.4 Jewish Communities

Another group with which the *Didache* community has formed boundaries is that of non-Christian Jews. For the early church, the Jewish groups were competitors in the claim of the identity of the people-of-God. Hence, the *Didache* community had

[133] Draper, "Role of Ritual," 55.
[134] Tajfel and Turner, "Social Identity Theory," 20.

to maintain its boundaries with these Jewish groups and emphasize its superiority over them. It has already been noted above that the inclusion of the *sectio evangelica* in the Two Ways section distinguishes the community from other Jewish groups.[135] However, the boundary between the *Didache* community and Jewish groups is most clearly articulated in *Did* 8. The instructions on fasting and prayers in that chapter essentially advocate a separation from non-Christian Jewish communities.[136] The practices of fasting and prayers are chosen as points of departure because these are important Jewish ancestral customs, the observance of which marks the Jewish identity in the period of the early church.[137] Hence, separating the community's practices of fasting and prayers from those of other Jewish groups helps to distinguish the *Didache* community from its Jewish environment.

Several features of the instructions in *Did* 8 also serve to sharpen the group boundaries between the *Didache* community and other Jewish groups. First, the *Didache* calls the opponents "hypocrites". This negative term vilifies the rival groups. This rhetorical move could reduce any possible dissonance the opponents may produce for the community.[138] Second, although no explanation is given for the proposed fasting days and prayers in the *Didache*, the accusation of the opponents' practice as those of hypocrites would imply that the practices of the *Didache* community are superior to the Jewish counterparts. This would then convey the impression that the Jewish practices are regarded as outdated.[139] This contrast between the new and the old, the superior and the inferior, reinforces the boundary between the two groups. Third, the *Didache* strengthens the distinctive identity of the group by stressing the differences in the details of these practices between the community and the rival groups and minimizing the points they have in common.[140] The different days of fasting and the particular content of prayer are emphasized over

[135] Williams, "Social Memory," 38. See sections 5.4.1 and 6.2.1 above.
[136] Draper, "Christian Self-Definition," 230–31, Finlan, "Identity," 23.
[137] Margaret H. Williams, "The Shaping of the Identity of the Jewish Community in Rome in Antiquity," in *Christians as a Religious Minority in a Multicultural City*, eds. Jürgen Zangenberg and Michael Labahn, JSNTSup 243 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 34–36.
[138] Rothbart and Lewis, "Cognitive Processes," 347–82.
[139] Murray, *Playing a Jewish Game*, 124.
[140] This is indeed a strategy often used by early Christian writers. See Bas ter Haar Romeny, "Hypotheses on the Development of Judaism and Christianity in Syria in the Period after 70 C.E.," in *Matthew and the Didache*, ed. Huub van de Sandt (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 33.

the resemblance between these corresponding Christian and Jewish practices. This makes it possible to maintain a sharp boundary between the groups despite their common origin and similarities.

Maintaining a sharp distinction with other Jewish groups allows the *Didache* community to have a more unique identity within its social milieu. It helps to install a strong sense of social identity within its members.[141] Moreover, the presence of such rival groups provides a reference point of comparison, so that by derogating the rival groups, the ingroup will be more positively evaluated. When challenged by the competitions from these Jewish groups, such strategy of sharpening group boundaries would help to maintain the solidarity of the *Didache* community.

6.2.5 Swindlers and Unrepentant Sinners

The last group against which the *Didache* needs to draw a sharp boundary consists of those who claim to be insiders, but are unacceptable in the community according to its norms. According to the *Didache*, there are two types of such people. One is the incomers to the community, who claim to be fellow Christians or even charismatic leaders, but do not conform to the norms of the community. The other group consists of community members who violate group norms but refuse to repent. The presence of these deviant "insiders" can pose serious threats to the harmony of the group. Therefore, boundaries have to be drawn against them.

Clear instructions are given in *Did* 11–12 to help the community to discern authentic charismatic leaders from false ones, as well as acceptable settlers from unacceptable ones. While there are some allowance for the incoming charismatic's deviant behaviours (11:7, 11, also 10:7), strict rules are given to avoid the resources of the resources of the community being abused. These rules render those not conforming to the rules as outsiders instead of insiders that they claim to be. By classifying these swindlers as an outgroup, the *Didache* can minimize the dissonance generated from observing deviant behaviours from an ingroup member, and hence

[141] O'Loughlin, "Source for Picturing," 92. See also Kanter, *Commitment*, 71, where she observes that to develop maximum commitment in its members, a group must be sharply differentiated from its environment.

avoid the community itself being negatively evaluated by its own members.[142] Since the negative evaluation is now attributed to outsiders, the positive distinctiveness of the ingroup is preserved. Therefore, the regulations in *Did* 11–12 not only serve the practical purpose of protecting the community from being exploited, they also help to reduce the negative social-psychological effects generated in community members, and thus increase the solidarity of the group. Furthermore, divisions caused by deviant leaders are taken to be a sign of the coming of the end (16:3–4).[143] Hence, community members should not be discouraged by such turbulence, since the internal strife does not indicate that the community itself is unfavorable, but rather confirms the worldview and proclamation of the community.

Similar boundaries are drawn, though less sharply, against community members who deviate from the group norm. In 15:3, unrepentant members are cut off from contact with other community members. It is noted that even though the sinner may have only wronged a single individual,[144] all are obligated to refuse contact with him or her.[145] The forbiddance of participation in the Eucharist for those in dispute with others (14:2) also serves to isolate the sinned member from the community. Although these disciplinary measures are only to be held until the sinner repented and reconciled, the unrepentant sinners are still rendered temporarily as outsiders. Hence, a boundary is set between the community and the unrepentant. Besides enforcing community order, by casting the offender outside the group boundary, or at least to the periphery of the group, albeit temporarily, dissonance resulted from observing an insider violating endorsed group values could be reduced. It would also have an effect of motivating the offenders to re-identify with the community, since peripheral group members are often motivated to secure their group membership.[146] This would contribute to strengthening group cohesiveness.

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[142] Glasford et. al., "Intragroup Dissonance," 1057–64 observes that dissonance is experienced only when an ingroup, but not when an outgroup, violates a personal value.
[143] Del Verme, Didache *and Judaism*, 260–61.
[144] Note the singular in κατὰ τοῦ ἑτέρου.
[145] Bernhard Poschmann, *Paenitentia secunda*, Theophaneia 1 (Bonn: Hanstein 1940, repr. 1964), 95.
[146] Jeffery G. Noel et. al., "Peripheral Ingroup Membership Status and Public Negativity toward Outgroups," *JPSP* 68 (1995): 127–37.

Another disciplinary measure concerning members breaking the group norms is perhaps found in 1:5. In that context, the consequences for those accepting alms without being in need are mentioned. The references to giving justice for the reason of taking it (δώσει δίκην ἱνατί ἔλαβε), imprisonment (ἐν συνοχῇ),[147] interrogation (ἐξετασθήσεται περὶ ὧν ἔπραξε), and paying back (ἀποδῷ τὸν ἔσχατον κοδράντην) suggest that earthly discipline is in view, even though the eschatological aspect is not to be ruled out.[148] Hence, Draper asserts that some kind of community investigation and retributive justice are involved.[149] Such an interpretation is uncertain, since the resemblance to Matt 5:25–26 may suggest that the *Didache* here is drawing on traditional material instead of describing the disciplinary measure of the *Didache* community itself. Nevertheless, the punishments mentioned connote a sense of boundary against the offenders.

In short, in order to maintain the cohesiveness of the community, the *Didache* needs not only to deal with attacks from outside, but also to prevent deviants from jeopardizing members' identification with the group. One way the *Didache* does this is by drawing boundaries against swindlers and offenders. By labeling those incomers not conforming to the group norms as false-prophets or false-members, and by isolating unrepentant sinners from the ingroup, the *Didache* attempts to reduce the members' negative evaluations of the group. As offenders are defined as outgroup, the dissonance generated in group members can be minimized, and hence the adherence of members to the group is maintained.

6.2.6 Concluding Summary

Social identity theories, especially studies on the interaction between intergroup relations and intragroup processes, suggest that an effective way to maintain group solidarity is by comparison with outgroups, which enhances members' positive evaluation of the ingroup. The mere existence of an outgroup can already

[147] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 83 asserts that συνοχή here means "prison" instead of "danger, fear". This interpretation is reasonable in view of the description of events that follow.
[148] Rordorf, "Transmission textuelle," 508 and Layton, "*Didache* 1:3b–2:1," 363–67 support an eschatological interpretation.
[149] Draper, "Moral Economy," 6.

produce ingroup bias, which increases members' esteem of the ingroup.[150] Moreover, by emphasizing threats from outgroups, internal rifts within the ingroup would become less significant in the perception of members, and hence the cohesiveness of the ingroup can be increased.[151] On the other hand, when the community is challenged by outgroup attacks, or when outgroup attractions threaten to weaken members' identification with the ingroup, strategies such as providing new dimensions of comparison or giving different values to the attributes of comparison can help to retrieve the positive distinctiveness of the group, and hence resolving the threat.[152] Therefore, clarifying the community's relation with outgroups would be an important move to maintain the cohesiveness of the group.

In the *Didache*, the group boundary is defined primarily by the Jesus traditions and the community rituals. The acceptance of the former and the participation in the latter provide the basic criteria to distinguish an insider from an outsider. They also legitimize the social reality of the group by conveying the superiority of the group over other groups. In particular, the people-of-God identity and the promises and gifts the community received from God, through Jesus, are stressed to provide a favorable dimension of comparison with other groups. Hardship experienced is given a positive value as the cost of the way of life. Such comparisons place the community in a positive light, and hence increases members' identification with the group. In response to threats from various groups, the *Didache* attempts to sharpen the community's boundaries against the pagan society, non-Christian Jews, and offenders who are insiders or claim to be insiders. By drawing a clear line between the community and these groups and by derogating the rival groups, the *Didache* insulates members from these rival groups and minimizes the negative influences on community members. All these strategies of sharpening group boundaries in the *Didache* serve to maintain the solidarity of the group in the midst of the tensions it experiences.

[150] Otten and Moskowitz, "In-Group Bias," 77–89.
[151] Dovidio, "Bridging," 5–6.
[152] Tajfel and Turner, "Social Identity Theory," 20.

6.3 Conclusion

Challenges from outgroups and conflicts generated by negative experiences within the ingroup can both threaten the cohesiveness of a community. According to social identity theories, an effective strategy to reduce such threats and to maintain the solidarity of a group is to strengthen the social identity of group members. This can be done, for example, by affirming the positive distinctiveness of the ingroup, or by derogation of outgroups. In the *Didache*, one can see such group maintenance strategies are employed. The instructions contained in this document emphasize the people-of-God identity of the community, which it receives through Jesus Christ. This means that the community has embarked on the way of life, and it looks forward to the final fulfillment of God's promises to his people. Hence, the community is attributed a high status in the conception of its members. This attracts their adherence to the group. On the other hand, the *Didache* condemns the culture and practices of the pagan society as the way of death, denounces the competing Jewish groups as hypocrites, and reproaches as outsiders those incomers who do not conform to the group norms, as well as those unrepentant ingroup members. These disparagements also increase the positive distinctiveness of the *Didache* community, and hence function to establish solidarity in the group.

As the social identity of members become more salient, they will be more willing to follow the group norms. Conversely, conforming to group norms and stereotypes can enhance a member's cognition of belonging to the group, and hence reinforcing their social identity. Therefore, by setting out rules and regulations for the personal and communal life, the *Didache* not only seeks to maintain the order of the community, but also provides a way to enhance members' identification with the group. In particular, both incoming and residential leaders have to show a high ethical standard, so that they can be prototypes of the group in imitation to the arch-prototype, that is, God himself. Maintaining a positively perceived leadership, which in turn enhances the realization of group norms, is an important aspect of the *Didache*'s group maintenance strategy.

Furthermore, the ritual instructions in the *Didache* also play an important function in group maintenance. By repeatedly performing the community rituals, which convey the special identity and hope of the community, members are continuously reminded of their privileges as the people-of-God, and experience the oneness of the group. This increases members' commitment to the group, especially in the cognitive and emotional aspects. On the other hand, the rituals also contribute to sharpen the community's boundaries with non-members and competing outgroups. This offers a stronger sense of importance to ingroup members, and hence reinforces their attachment to the group.

Finally, the instructions in the *Didache* also enhance conflict resolution in case disputes arise in the community. The people-of-God identity gives an equal status for all members of the group. Responsibilities in community life, such as the performance of rituals and the support of community leaders, enhance cooperation between individual members or subgroups. The target of perfection provides a common goal for the community. The instructions of the *Didache* itself, presented as the teaching of the Lord through the twelve apostles, offer authoritative support. According to Allport's contact theory, all these are essential factors for successful conflict resolution.

In sum, one important function of the *Didache* is to maintain the cohesiveness of the community by strengthening members' social identity. It provides means for members to cognitively identify with the community, to positively evaluate the group, and to increase their emotional attachment. In these ways, it helps early Christians to tackle challenges from other communities, as well as from within the group.

Chapter 7
Group Maintenance in James and the *Didache*: A Comparison

The above chapters have investigated some of the community concerns in James and the *Didache*, especially those ingroup tensions reflected in these two early Christian writings. The rhetorical strategy for resolving these tensions are then explored with the aid of social-scientific theories including the social identity theory, the self-categorization theory and various models in conflict theories. This chapter will be devoted to a comparison of the two writings from the perspectives of group tensions and group maintenance. Similarities as well as contrasts will be highlighted.

7.1 Conflict Situations

From the analysis of the conflict situations reflected in James and the *Didache*, several points of comparison can be observed. Some issues are treated by both writings, indicating similar community tensions. On the other hand, there are differences in the particular concerns in the two writings.

7.1.1 Tensions among Leaders

The first point to be noted is the conflict caused by problems concerning those in the leading roles of the community. In the *Didache*, the discernment of the authenticity of incoming charismatics is an urgent problem (*Did* 11). In fact, one of the fundamental purposes of the *Didache* is to help the community to guard against false teachers and their teachings. The privilege offered to those teachers and prophets settling in the community is also a potential source of conflict (*Did* 13). Moreover, the instructions concerning bishops and deacons (*Did* 15) probably indicate competition between incoming charismatics and local leaders. All these issues threaten the stability of the community.

On the other hand, tension caused by community leaders is also indicated in James, not least in the admonition of Jas 3:1, which reveals that there were competitions among community members for teaching positions. It has been argued

above that the warnings about the destructive effect of the tongue and the distinction between true and false wisdom in Jas 3 also reflect the conflicts among those in the community who seeks to be teachers.[1] Moreover, the wars and fightings in Jas 4 are probably also related to the conflicts among leaders.

One primary concern, common to both James and the *Didache*, is the moral standard of community leaders. According to social identity theory, group leaders are seen as group prototypes embodying the core values of the group. Hence, the quality of leaders would have far-reaching effects for the group. Leaders lacking the required qualities could be destructive for the solidarity of the group. Therefore, both James and the *Didache* are greatly concerned with avoiding such destructive influences caused by occupants of leading positions who do not meet the standard according to the group norms.

Another common concern of James and the *Didache* about community leaders is that of false teaching contradictory to the instructions contained in those writings. Several times the *Didache* warns the audience to guard against those who cause the community to depart from the instructions which it presents (6:1; 11:2). In James, tension caused by teaching contrary to the author's statements is most clearly seen in the debate about faith and work in Jas 2. Hence, one witnesses in both James and the *Didache* the conflict caused by different teachings among early communities of believers, as well as the authors' attempts to unify the faith and praxis of their audiences.

It should be remarked that while it is a popular view among commentators of both James and the *Didache* that the concern for different teachings points to the debate between the traditions of Paul and the Jewish Christians,[2] it is at least equally likely that the competitions among leaders reflect common human experiences of competing for honour and privilege. The Greco-Roman culture of honour and shame,

[1] See above section 3.4.

[2] That Jas 2 reflects the debate between James and Paul as witnessed in Gal 2 is a popular view among commentators of James. See for example Dibelius, *James*, 151–80, Martin, *James*, 75–101, Adamson, *The Man and His Message*, 195–227. On the other hand, some commentators of the *Didache* also views the debate between James and Paul behind some of its instructions. See for example Draper, "Torah and Troublesome Apostles," 340–63 and Jefford, "Locating," 39–68.

as well as the scarcity of resources in the ancient world, only make such kinds of competitions more likely to happen.

Though the tension among leaders is a common issue for both James and the *Didache*, the two documents also have their own particular concerns for the situation. In the *Didache*, the primary concern seems to be the order of the community. One important purpose of the instructions about leaders is to prevent the community being exploited by imposters. The command to honour the local leaders also reveals the possibility that the order of the community is at stake, owing to challenges from some incomers. On the other hand, James seems to be more concerned with the polarizing effect caused by the tensions among leaders and would-be leaders, since it threatens to tear apart the community. The emphasis on making peace in the discussion on true and false wisdom clearly indicates this concern in James. In other words, James is more focused on the threats coming from within the community itself, while the *Didache* puts more emphasis on the danger from outside.

7.1.2 Tensions between Rich and Poor

Given the socio-economic strata of the agrarian Greco-Roman society,[3] it is no surprise that the tension between rich and poor was a pressing issue within the early church. Both James and the *Didache* contain teachings in response to this social reality. A large portion of James is devoted to the theme of wealth and poverty (Jas 1:9–11; 2:1–17; 4:13–5:6). Two issues are particularly evident in James. One is the partiality shown by the community in favour of the rich (Jas 2:1–7). The other is the arrogant and irreverent attitude of the rich, probably including some of the rich believers in the community (Jas 4:13–5:6). In the *Didache*, the theme of rich and poor is perhaps not as prominent as in James, but enough is said to permit some commentators to speak about the "economic system of the *Didache* community."[4] Some parts of the Two Ways section focus particularly on the treatment of the lowly members, exhorting believers to support them by sharing resources (*Did* 1:5–6; 4:5–8) and to treat them fairly (4:10). The rules concerning fellow believers passing through

[3] For a detailed description of the social strataof the agrarian societies, see Lenski, *Power and Privilege*, 189–296.
[4] Milavec, "Economic Safety Net," 73–84, Draper, "Moral Economy."

or settling in the community (*Did* 12) are also to be understood against the background of the reality of poverty in the whole society.

The inequality of members of different social strata and the oppression of the poor are important factors that weaken the solidarity of the faith community, not just because these social problems could cause social instability, but also because these situations are in clash with the community's self-understanding as the people-of-God. The cognitive dissonance generated from this discrepancy can be a threat to believers' identification with the faith community. Hence, both James and the *Didache* must deal with this problem in order to maintain the cohesiveness of the group. Even though neither writing seeks to overturn the social inequality at large, by prompting the believers to show mercy and generosity to the poor, they both attempt to counter the general attitudes towards rich and poor in the dominant society, so that the particular self-understanding of the faith community can be maintained.

While the tension between rich and poor is a common concern for both James and the *Didache*, the ways the two writings focus on this problem are obviously different. For James, the problem at stake is believers' adherence to the rich, presumably trying to get their support. In addition, some rich believers may have retained their indulgent life-style. For James, such a worldly attitude is in direct contrast to their claim of faith in Christ and is one of the main factors contributing to the disorder in the community. By contrast, there is little in the *Didache* to suggest that adherence to the rich is a serious problem in the community. The focus of the *Didache* more consistently lies on the support of the poor. This contrast does not necessarily suggest that rich people were lacking in the *Didache* community. It only shows that James and the *Didache* pay attention to different aspects of the socio-economic issue.

Furthermore, although both James and the *Didache* emphasize mercy and generosity towards their needy members, they again have different focus on this issue. In the *Didache*, much attention is paid to the establishment of a reasonable system to support those members in need, so that on the one hand those in need would not be ignored, but on the other hand, the resources of the community would not be abused.

In particular, some possible interpolations by the Didachist on the traditional Two Ways material seem to be targeted at avoiding the generosity of the community being exploited (*Did* 1:5–6).[5] In order to achieve this purpose, an effective way to discern swindlers is necessary (*Did* 11–12). On the contrary, there is no attempt in James to organize any support system in the community. What is important for James is willingness of believers to show their mercy through supplying bodily needs for the poor. The danger of swindlers is simply not mentioned in the letter. Therefore, one sees again that the concerns of James and the *Didache* are quite different, although they share a common socio-economic background of the Greco-Roman society. A correct attitude on the part of the believers in accordance with their faith is most crucial for James, but the *Didache* regards it as equally important that an orderly system governs the operation of the group, which has to be maintained by clearly defined regulations.

7.1.3 Disputes and Fightings among Members

The fact that both James and the *Didache* are concerned about conflicts among their audiences is not surprising since it is a very common phenomenon for groups to have some disputes among its members.[6] In James, the audience is said to be having wars and fightings among them, even to such an extent that the author exaggeratedly expresses that they are committing murder (Jas 4:1–3). These conflicts are most likely caused by their competitions for gain or honour, or both. This may also be a result of the escalation of the conflict among community leaders, so that the hostility among disputing leaders spreads over the whole community, perhaps even to the extent that the community is divided into parties in opposition to one another.[7] On the other hand, disputes among members are not stressed to any great extent in the *Didache*. However, the prohibition against those having dispute with a fellow member to join the community rituals (*Did* 14:2) and the instructions on the treatment for offenders (*Did* 15:3) indicate that conflict among members is at least considered to be a potential danger in the *Didache* community.

[5] For an redaction analysis of these two verses, see Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 81–86.
[6] Wilmot and Hocker, *Interpersonal Conflict*, 2–7.
[7] This is suggested by ἐριθεία in Jas 3:16. See the discussion above in section 3.4.2.

Related to the concern about disputes is the interest in speech ethics. Both James and the *Didache* have admonitions against sins in speech such as speaking evil (Jas 3:9–10; 4:11; *Did* 2:3), grumbling (Jas 5:9; *Did* 3:6) and falsely swearing (Jas 5:12; *Did* 2:3). Though the Greek words used in the two documents are different, they can be regarded as showing a similar concern. These admonitions are probably traditional materials,[8] but the community concerns in both James and the *Didache*, especially the explicit mention of wars and fightings among believers in James, suggest that they are not given only as general ethical exhortations, but also reflect the authors' knowledge of the community situations of the audience. One of the likely causes for these wrongful speeches could be the disputes in the community, which lead to anger in disputants. These harsh speeches could feed back to the conflict situation, causing the conflict to escalate.

Though the concern for dispute among members is common to James and the *Didache*, they have some different perspectives to the problem. For James, the emphasis is put on the evil desires within believers, which is regarded as the primary cause of the wars and fightings (Jas 4:1). The dividedness of the inner-life of believers finds expression in strife in the community. James regards such disputes as indicators of the believers' vain religion. Hence, repentance on the part of believers is stressed (Jas 4:4–10). The *Didache*, on the other hand, does not explicitly mention the cause of disputes among members, though other issues treated in the document, such as the support of leaders and fellow members, could be part of the reasons. The *Didache* mainly views the problem of dispute from the perspective of community order. While the *Didache* is also concerned with the repentance of believers, more stress is put on how the whole community should treat the offenders.

In addition, a comparison to a corresponding saying in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:21–26) provides interesting insights. Two points may be noted. First, the Matthean saying, like James and the *Didache*, draws a close relation between speech ethic and anger (Matt 5:22). This supports the interpretation that the concern

[8] Dibelius is one example of commentators who emphasizes the reliance of James on traditional materials. See Dibelius, *James*. On the other hand, the dependence of the *Didache* on traditions, especially its Jewish roots, is well observed by van de Sandt. See van de Sandt and Flusser, *Didache*.

on speeches in James and the *Didache* are related to community disputes. Second, both James and the *Didache* agree with the priority of reconciliation over ritual sacrifice, as also expressed in the Matthean saying (Matt 5:23–26), but the emphasis in the two writings are different. The *Didache* focuses on the command that reconciliation must be made before believers participate in community rituals. On the contrary, James does not explicitly give such a command, but retains the spirit in the Matthean saying that right relations between fellow believers are core expressions of true reverence. Hence, this comparison highlights again both the similarity and differences between James and the *Didache* on the issue of community disputes.

7.1.4 Tensions with Jewish Traditions

From the investigation of previous chapters, one can also observe some tensions reflected in the *Didache*, but not in James. One example is the relation with non-Christian Jews. This is especially evident in *Did* 8 where instructions are given concerning the believers' practices of fasting and prayers to make a sharp distinction with corresponding Jewish practices. This polemic passage in the *Didache* suggests, among other concerns, the possible danger of some community members being attracted to competing Jewish groups. This does not necessarily indicate that the *Didache* community had already separated completely from non-Christian Jews. Rather, the similarity between the community's practices and those of the rival Jewish groups suggests that they still had close contact.[9] However, the rift with other Jewish groups had become sufficiently great to necessitate a clear distinction between the *Didache* community and other Jews. On the contrary, there is no indication of the need of distinguishing from other Jewish groups in James. The epistle takes for granted that believers should keep adhered to the Jewish Law, interpreted through the command of love (Jas 1:25; 2:8). No details for practicing the Law or religious acts are mentioned. This observation shows that the author of James did not regard other Jewish groups as a serious threat to the community of believers.

Besides competitions from other Jewish groups, the Jewish roots of the early church also caused other tensions within the community. In the *Didache*, one may

[9] Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 132.

observe the tension between Jewish and Gentile believers through those admonitions in the Two Ways section that are particularly directed against pagan practices, such as idolatry, practicing magic, making drugs, and killing new-borns. The emphasis on these pagan practices indicates that the Didachist had a particular concern on those Gentile believers, who were used to those practices before converted to Christianity and still not completely cut off from them. This does not only affect the morality of the Gentile believers themselves, but may also cause dissension from the Jewish believers, who are particularly repulsive to these practices, owing to their Jewish traditions. Again, there seems to be no such concern in James. The reason is probably that the audience of James were mainly Jewish, and thus pagan practices did not pose a serious problem for the community members.

Furthermore, it is possible that the extent to which Gentile believers should comply to Jewish Laws also caused some tensions in the *Didache* community. It has been argued above that there is not enough evidence in the *Didache* to suggest the Didachist envisions Gentile believers finally becoming full Jews.[10] Nevertheless, the command to bear whatever one can concerning food (*Did* 6:3) possibly suggests some concern for the fellowship between Jewish and Gentile believers.[11] Such a concern is again absent in James.[12] However, the focus on the pursuit of perfection, which is the broader concern of *Did* 6:3 and other instructions in the *Didache*, is common with the same concern for perfection in James.

7.1.5 Problems about Rituals

Another type of concern particular to the *Didache* is the practice of community rituals. The detailed instructions in *Did* 7–10 not only show the need to pass on the practices of rituals in the early church. The selective nature of the instructions indicates that the *Didache* may also have the purpose of standardizing the ritual practices for various local communities. The discrepancy in ritual practices could be a potential source of conflict for the community, as one may observe form the halakhic debate of Jewish parties. The above investigations have highlighted at

[10] See above section 5.4.2.
[11] Jefford, "Tradition and Witness," 416–17, Slee, *Church in Antioch*, 87–90.
[12] The reason for this absence is perhaps that the initial audience of James consisted of mainly Jewish Christians.

least three aspects of the significance of the ritual section in the *Didache*. First, since the symbolic actions of rituals express the identity and core values of the community, a unified understanding of community rituals is necessary for the solidarity of the group. Second, the restrictions on the participants of the rituals, especially the Eucharistic meal, shows the community's concern to distinguish between insiders and outsiders. Third, some details in the ritual instructions, such as the concession of baptismal water, may indicate that the validity of the rituals is at stake.

In contrast, there are almost no instructions on community rituals in James, except perhaps the exhortations on community gathering in Jas 5:13–18. Even in that passage, the focus is not on how to perform the rituals, but on the importance of mutual sharing. The absence of ritual instructions may suggest that ritual performance is not a particular concern for James' audience. At least this is not what the author of James regarded as an urgent problem of the community.

7.1.6 Concluding Summary

By analyzing the community tensions reflected in James and the *Didache*, one sees that there are several similar problems faced by the audiences of the two compositions. The issues addressed in both compositions focus more on ingroup cohesiveness than on attacks from the pagan world.[13] Competitions between leaders, unacceptable qualities and behaviours among leaders, disputes among community members, and economic tensions caused by the highly stratified society are among the main concerns of both documents. However, these similar problems do not necessarily imply that James and the *Didache* have the same provenance.[14] Rather, the similarities may be more aptly explained by the fact that both the audiences of James and the *Didache* were situated in the general social background of the Greco-

[13] Weren, "Ideal Community," 198 observed that although James and the *Didache* are polemically orientated, the authors mainly oppose people with divergent views within the community. Overman, "Problems with Pluralism," 265 also asserts that schism within the community is a far greater concern in the *Didache* than the tensions with the broader society.

[14] Although it is a popular view among some scholars to see both James and the *Didache*, as well as the Gospel of Matthew, as originated from the Jewish Christian community in Antioch, this study does not depend on these theories of the provenance of these documents. This study does not claim to support or reject the Antioch provenance of James and the *Didache*. For discussions of the Antioch provenance, see for example Magnus Zetterholm, "The Didache, Matthew, James—and Paul: Reconstructing Historical Developments in Antioch." In *Mathew, James, and Didache*, eds. Huub van de Sandt and Jürgen K. Zangenberg, (Atlanta: SBL, 2008), 73–90.

Roman society and that both writings were addressed to a broad audience in which those group dynamics common to human experiences could be easily observed.

Even though some similar problems are reflected in James and the *Didache*, the perspectives of the two compositions on these problems show some important differences. James attributes the root of the conflicts to the evil desires within believers. The author accuses believers of their dividedness and being not whole-heartedly devoted to God. One of the principle concerns of James is that this dividedness within believers would express itself in the dividedness of the community and could finally split the community apart. On the other hand, while also concerned about the harmony and cohesiveness of the community, the *Didache* pays more attention to those causes of conflict coming from outside. In particular, the *Didache* shows a clear worry about swindlers and imposters exploiting the community. Hence, for the Didachist, means for maintaining the proper order of the community is as important as correct faith and attitude of individual believers.

There are also some tensions reflected in the *Didache* which seems to be lacking in James. These include the community's relation to other Jewish groups and the problems about the performance of community rituals. These different concerns could be due to different historical situations of the two compositions. However, without appealing to the reconstruction of the precise historical settings, such discrepancy can be another indication of different perspectives both authors have on community issues. For the *Didache*, relations with other groups and collective behaviours of the community are regarded as potential threats to the cohesiveness of the audience, while for James the focus is mainly on the inner dispositions of the believers.

7.2 Group Maintenance Strategies

Both James and the *Didache* are concerned about the cohesiveness of their audiences, and some similar community problems are reflected in them. The rhetoric strategies of the two compositions for maintaining harmony within the community also show both similarities and differences. The following discussion compares some key observations made in the previous chapters on James and the *Didache*.

7.2.1 Identity of the Faith Community

One key perspective of this study on the group maintenance strategies of James and the *Didache* is how the conception of social identity could have affected the group dynamic of the early communities of believers. Hence, the first thing to be observed is how both documents attempt to establish and consolidate the social identity of those Christ-followers. Both James and the *Didache* present the believers' identity primarily as the elected people-of-God, through the salvation of Christ. James addresses the audience as the twelve tribes in the Diaspora. This connects the identity of the community to the whole tradition of Israel's hope of being gathered by God in the eschaton into one nation again. A similar conception of self-identity is also expressed in the *Didache*, especially in the ritual prayers in *Did* 9–10. Moreover, this shared identity of believers is consolidated by the common community experiences exhorted in the instructions for community assemblies and rituals (Jas 5:13–20; *Did* 7–10). This portrayal of self-identity gives a sense of groupness to believers, not only for those in the same local community, but also for the various geographically spread local communities. As one people-of-God, all believers are depicted by the authors as in solidarity, sharing the same destiny.

The role of Christology in establishing the social identity of believers must not be overlooked. For the early Christians, the most basic feature that defines their identity is their faith in Jesus Christ, which distinguishes believers from other Jews, as well as pagans. Even though there is no elaborated Christology in both James and the *Didache*, the audience's faith in Christ is nevertheless at the core of both writings. In James, the admonition against partiality is given on the basis of the audience's faith in Christ. Christ's role as the eschatological judge is also stressed to strengthen the force of the author's persuasion. In the *Didache*, the centrality of Christology is expressed in the incorporation of Jesus traditions into Jewish materials such as the Two-Ways, in the explicit confession of Christ in the ritual prayers, and in the depiction of the coming of Christ in the apocalyptic ending.

The emphasis on the people-of-God identity contributes in several ways to the group maintenance in James and the *Didache*. First, studies in social identity theory assert that the mere sense of belonging to the same group is sufficient for generating

ingroup bias within group members.[15] People tend to see members of the same group in a more positive light, to be more easily influenced by ingroup members, and more ready to forgive faults of ingroup members. Hence, in cases when rifts occur among group members, stressing the common social identity can help to reduce the sense of hostility and to maintain the cohesiveness of the community. Moreover, the emphasis on the people-of-God identity also makes the audience more ready to accept the admonitions from the authors, since the authors also share the same social identity. This could significantly increase the impact of the writings on the audience.

Second, the emphasis on the people-of-God identity of believers can give a sense of superiority to the audience in comparison to other competing groups, including non-believing Jews and pagans. Since the believers are the people-of-God, who in turn are to receive God's promised kingdom, they should highly value their membership in this community. This superiority is further highlighted by the stress on eschatological rewards and punishments in the two writings. These emphases give incentive for believers to stay committed to the group.[16] In order to receive the expected rewards, believers are expected to remain part of the community at all costs. This is clearly expressed in the theme of endurance in James (Jas 1:2–4, 12; 5:7–11) and in the exhortation to gather frequently in the *Didache* (*Did* 16:2). The sense of superiority is especially important when the group is challenged by rival groups.[17] By stressing the superiority of the group, its positive distinctiveness is increased, and thus members' commitment to the group is strengthened.

Third, when the community is divided into conflicting subgroups owing to, for example, differences in opinions or competitions among group leaders, the emphasis on the people-of-God identity helps to offer a common ingroup identity for the believers. The conception of one people-of-God forms a superordinate category which unites the members of the rival subgroups into one transcendent group. In particular, in both James and the *Didache*, one witnesses tensions between the poor and those more well-off members in the community. This socio-economic difference

[15] Billig and Tajfel, "Social Categorization," 27–52, Dovidio, "Bridging," 3.
[16] Kanter, *Commitment*, 71–72.
[17] Tajfel and Turner, "Social Identity Theory," 19–20.

could materialize into conflicting subgroups among the community of believers. The relative power of the subgroups would be highly unbalanced owing to the uneven distribution of resources. By emphasizing the common ingroup identity, the authors let the disadvantaged members gain a sense of status and power. This could increase the attachment of these members to the group, and hence the cohesiveness of the community is enhanced.

In sum, in both James and the *Didache*, the self-understanding of the believers as the people-of-God forms the basis for the authors' attempt to maintain the solidarity of the community and to persuade the audience to take heed to the writings' admonitions. Both documents presuppose this common ingroup identity for the audience, and make effort to enhance believers' identification with the group. With this social identity perspective, one understands more thoroughly the significance of some of the rhetorical features in both documents for group maintenance.

7.2.2 Group Boundaries

Closely connected to the establishment of ingroup identity is the ways in which the group creates boundaries with other groups. Although in both James and the *Didache* the main focus is not on polemic with rival groups, it is still essential for both authors to sharpen the audience's boundary with some outgroups in order to strengthen the solidarity of the faith community. For such a purpose, derogation of rival groups is often employed as a useful strategy. In the *Didache*, the existence of rival groups is most obviously seen in the instructions of fasting and prayers in *Did* 8, where non-believing Jews, probably members of the Pharisee party, are derogated as hypocrites. The *Didache* also makes efforts to represent those not meeting the group norms as outgroups. Besides protecting the community from the exploitation of swindlers, such a move also serves the purpose of reducing the dissonance generated from witnessing unacceptable behaviours in supposed ingroup members. On the other hand, the most prominent outgroup in James is the wicked rich. There are harsh rebukes against the rich in the letter, especially in 2:6–7 and 4:13–5:6. The wicked rich are placed in diametric opposition to the elected poor (2:5), that is, the faith community itself. However, it must be recalled that the wicked rich in James is not a

well-defined rival outgroup. The rich in James is presented as a stereotype instead of a concrete outgroup. This implies that the rebukes against the rich are directed not only to non-believers, but also to believers who nevertheless acquire the attitudes and behaviours of the wicked rich. These believers who follow the ways of the wicked rich are part of the larger category rebuked in the letter, namely, the friends of the world (4:4), who are also supposed to be part of the community, but fall short of the required standard according to the author. Hence, like the *Didache*, James also represents those not adhering to the group norms set in the letter as outgroups. This means that the group boundary is not considered as an unalterable social reality, but is defined stereotypically, depending on people's choice of adhering to the group prototype or not. In Lockett's words, the group boundary for James is "strong but permeable."[18]

Some differences between the depictions of group boundaries in James and the *Didache* should be noted. First of all, the main targets of attack in the two compositions are different. The group of "hypocrites" in the *Didache*, that is, rival groups of non-believing Jews, is not a main concern in James. On the other hand, although the *Didache* also deals with the issues of poverty and resource distribution in the community, the rich is not the target of attack, as portrayed in James. Besides possible differences in social-historical situations of the two compositions, this difference in targeted outgroups reveals a different perception of the main dangers of the community on the part of the authors. While James tries to guard against arrogance and partiality jeopardizing the purity and solidarity of the faith community, the *Didache* is more concerned with distinguishing the true people-of-God from pretenders.

Another difference between the establishment of boundaries in James and the *Didache* is that the *Didache* is more inclined to define the group boundary through formal and public actions. The audience is to distinguish itself from the "hypocrites" by their particular days of fasting and their different wordings for prayers. The different day for worship (*Did* 14:1) may also contribute to the distinctiveness of the

[18] Lockett, "Strong and Weak Lines," 391–405.

community. Moreover, the main criterion for distinguishing true and false incoming members is conformity to the behaviours required in the document's instructions (*Did* 11–12). On the other hand, although James also provides many instructions on Christian life, the group boundary of believers is not mainly defined by particular actions, but by the inner dispositions of believers who devote wholeheartedly to God, an attitude that is expected to express itself in various actions of mercy, endurance and peacemaking. Hence, comparatively speaking, the group boundary in James is not as concretely defined as in the *Didache*. Nonetheless, this does not mean that the boundary in James is vague. James is as concerned as the *Didache* on maintaining a distinctive identity of believers from outsiders. However, James seems to see no need of providing clear criteria for the group to distinguish true members. Instead, James emphasizes more on the audience's self-examination of their own status as insiders.

7.2.3 Group Norm Inculcation

A characteristic of both James and the *Didache* is that both writings are very "practical", that is, they do not contain much elaboration on doctrines or theological concepts, but mainly give behavioural instructions. These instructions, especially those ethical admonitions, constitute the group norm for the community of believers. The inculcation of group norm not only serves the purpose of regulating personal and group behaviours within the community, but also helps to strengthen the sense of social identity in group members, since commitment to a group includes an aspect of moral commitment.[19] By coordinating believers' understanding of acceptable and unacceptable behaviours, community members would be able to have a greater sense of unity. Moreover, clear rules for behaviour can also help to prevent controversies from arising and to resolve disputes in case there is disagreement among members.

One similarity between the instructions in James and the *Didache* is that they both rely heavily on traditional sayings, including Jesus traditions as well as Jewish traditions, such as the Two Ways. However, there are also significant differences between the inculcation of group norm in the two documents. The first difference to be noted is the scope of instructions. The instructions in James are mostly moral

[19] Kanter, *Commitment*, 69.

admonitions. One main concern of the letter is how believers are treating each other in their community life. Community strife and mutual attacks are reproved, but few words are said on the ordinary activities of the community. Even the exhortations on the community assemblies (5:13–20) do not contain concrete instructions on how the assemblies should be hold, except the command for the elders to anoint the sick and pray for him (5:14). Thus, most instructions in James can be regarded as "not paraenetic but protreptic," not primarily communicating specific rules for concrete actions but rather advices on character formation.[20] On the contrary, besides moral admonitions, the *Didache* contains a lot of instructions for regulating the daily community life, including the practices of rituals and the criteria for distinguishing the authenticity of incomers. Hence, one gets an impression that while James addresses mainly the "trials" (Jas 1:2) and "suffering" (Jas 5:10) of the audience, wanting to maintain the stability of the group in situations of crisis, the *Didache* shows more interest in the organization of the community and maintaining the cohesiveness of the group through the activities of its daily life.

Furthermore, the manners in which James and the *Didache* deliver their instructions are also different in some aspects. James gives harsh reproofs to those believers having behaviours and attitudes unacceptable in the author's view. These are addressed to insiders who have gone astray. In contrast, the *Didache* does not contain harsh rebukes to those deviating from the group norms. The Two Ways section conveys the way of death without accusing the audience of committing those errors, only warning them against such actions. The instructions about swindlers are about how the community should discern them, without reproving the swindlers themselves. Also, the community is told how to treat those who have done wrong, but the *Didache* does not directly reprimand the offenders. The different manner of giving instructions again shows that strife in the community is a more concerned problem for James than for the *Didache*. Besides an indication of different style and genre, it seems possible that the situation of James' audience is more acute than the *Didache* community, and hence it is more urgent for James to correct those in the community who have gone astray.

[20] Luther, "Protreptic Ethics," 332.

7.2.4 Conflict Reduction Strategies

Both James and the *Didache* make some effort to deal with disputes among believers in the community. There are some similar features in their conflict reduction strategy. One tool to analyze these similar features is Allport's contact model,[21] which states that equal status, intergroup cooperation, common goals and support of authorities are essential constituents for successful conflict reduction. First, the emphasis of the people-of-God identity of believers in both documents forms a basis for the equal status of believers. In James, equality of status is further enhanced by the admonition against partiality and the emphasis that the poor, who are of low status in the broader society, are the heir of God's kingdom. The concern for the support of the needy ones in the *Didache* could likewise promote a sense of equal status in the community. Second, both James and the *Didache* encourage the audience to have frequent gatherings and close interactions. In James, community members are exhorted to share with each other in both joyful and sorrowful experiences (Jas 5:13–15). They are also encouraged to confess their sins and pray for each other for the benefit of the whole community (5:16). In the *Didache*, the exhortations on community life, including the instructions on community rituals and support of community leaders, provides opportunities and motives for cooperation among believers. Third, both James and the *Didache* urge the audience to pursue perfection, which is not so much an individual goal as a goal to be achieved by the whole community in the grace of God. As the community looks forward to the completion of God's promise when all believers become perfect as one people-of-God, meanwhile they should manifest this hope through pursuing a community life in accordance with God's decree of perfection. Lastly, both James and the *Didache* place themselves in a position of authority. They could function as an imposed third-party in cases of disputes. In addition, the *Didache* also stresses the authority of community leaders, empowering them to deal with conflict within the community. Therefore, according to Allport's contact model, both James and the *Didache* try to provide a community environment favorable to conflict reduction.

[21] Allport, *Nature of Prejudice*, 281.

However, one should also note the differences between the conflict reduction strategies in the two writings. In terms of conflict models, James is more akin to the harmony model, while the *Didache* is more akin to the regulative model.[22] In accordance with the harmony model, many sayings in James emphasize smooth relationships and avoidance of open expressions of conflict. Peace is one of the key emphasis in James and a key feature of true wisdom (Jas 3:17). Moreover, several admonitions in the letter, such as the request to be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger (1:19), the command to bridle one's tongue (1:26; 3:2) and the prohibition of slandering (4:11) and grumbling against one another (5:9) help to avoid open confrontations and negative emotional displays. The exhortation to endure in face of oppressions (5:7) also helps to avoid tensions in the community from materializing into concrete actions of strife. Moreover, James does not provide clear procedures for resolving disputes. Neither are detailed codes of behaviour given in the letter. In contrast, although also concerned on smooth relationships, the *Didache* nevertheless provides many concrete rules for the community in various situations, such as the performance of rituals and the treatment of incomers and settlers. Some confrontations would be expected or even required in case community rules are broken, for instance, when incomers are considered as false prophets or when those who want to settle refuse to work for their living. Furthermore, community members are required to shun the offenders who refuse to repent (*Did* 14:2; 15:3). On the contrary, shunning of offenders is not mentioned in James. Instead, turning back those gone astray is emphasized (Jas 5:19–20).

7.2.5 Claim of Authority

In order to ensure the admonitions are followed by the audience, the authors must claim authority for their teachings. In both James and the *Didache*, the instructions are presented as authoritative, received from God's revelation, which determines the selection of norms and values of the community.[23] A comparison of the two documents can be done using the three types of authority classified by Weber.[24] Both documents present their teaching as continuous with the Mosaic Law,

[22] For a description of the conflict models, see Kazan, "Culture and Conflict Management," 338–60.
[23] Weren, "Ideal Community," 198.
[24] Weber, "Three Types of Legitimate Rule," 1–11.

which is accepted by the early Christians as well as Jews, and in accordance with Jesus' interpretation of the Law. This establishes their legal authority. In the *Didache*, the legal authority is even more prominent since many of the instructions are given as precise rules of action supposed to be followed by the whole community. Traditional authority are also shown in the documents, as the teachings are presented not as something new but already known by the audience. This is especially the case of James. Moreover, the intense use of Jesus traditions, as well as Jewish traditions in the two compositions is an important means to establish traditional authority. The emphasis in the title of the *Didache* that the teachings are transmitted through the twelve apostles to the nations also contributes to the traditional authority of the *Didache*. In contrast to the first two types of authority, charismatic authority is not obvious in either James or the *Didache*. In James, the characters of the author are not emphasized. In the *Didache*, the author is not even named, with the teachings claimed to be from the Lord through the twelve apostles. However, the self-designation of the author in James as "James the slave of God and Jesus Christ", presumably the brother of Jesus, be it authentic or pseudipigraphic, alludes to the personal authority characteristic to the brother of Jesus who is also one of the earliest leaders of the Jerusalem church. On the other hand, the requirements for the quality of community leaders, including the incoming charismatics and the local bishops and deacons, establish indirectly the charismatic authority for the *Didache*.

From this comparison, one sees that the claims of authority in James and the *Didache* are quite similar, although there are some differences in the particular emphasis in each document. The authors of both documents expect the writing to be accepted by the audience as authoritative teachings rooted in the revelations of God and Jesus Christ, transmitted through the apostles and subsequent church leaders. One may say that the authority of the *Didache* is more legalistic than James, while James' authority is dependant more on the claimed identity of the author. However, roughly speaking, both James and the *Didache* present themselves to the audience in the same authoritative manner. This claimed authority is essential to both documents' aim of group maintenance.

7.2.6 Concluding Summary

The above discussion has highlighted some of the similarities and differences between the group maintenance strategies in James and the *Didache*. The most important point to be noted is that both documents envision a cohesive community of believers with the core understanding of self-identity as the people-of-God. According to social identity theories, the ingroup bias due to the identification with a group can help to reduce the negative effects from rifts among group members and to strengthen the solidarity of the community. In order to strengthen the social identity of the audience, both documents attempt to increase the positive distinctiveness of the group. One crucial way to do this is to invoke the audience's eschatological hope of receiving the kingdom of God and entering into perfection. This eschatological hope motivates believers to be more committed to the community, increases believers' sense of groupness by providing a common goal, and reduces the dissonance caused by negative experiences. In the language of dynamical systems, this provides the alternate attractor for the group to change from the state of conflict. This shared identity is more directly emphasized in James, particularly through the opening address which identifies the audience as the twelve tribes in the Diaspora. In the *Didache*, the shared identity is presented mainly through the common norms of behaviours, especially through the community rituals which express the solidarity of the whole community as the people-of-God.

The main difference between group maintenance in James and the *Didache* is that the latter provides more explicit and precise rules of actions to regulate personal and community lives of the audience. On the contrary, while James also gives many guidelines and instructions for believers' behaviours, few explicit rules are given. Rather, the letter focuses mainly on the inner dispositions of believers. For James, correct organization of the community seems to be not as important for maintaining the harmony of the group as correct attitudes on the part of believers. In light of the dynamical system perspective of conflict, which implies that effective conflict resolution should focus on the more fundamental elements comprising the conflict behaviors rather than the superficial manifestation of the conflict, James' strategy may be more effective for resolving the conflict within the community.

The similarities and differences between James and the *Didache* can be interpreted from various perspectives. Some attempts have been made by scholars to explore the possible relationship between the two documents. To quote two examples, Deppe regards "the organizational arrangement of Jas 5:7-20 as the presentation of a primitive church order less developed than *Did* 7-16,"[25] while van de Sandt argues for a strong relationship between Jas 1 and the *teknon* section of the *Didache*.[26] However, this study does not adopt the approach to investigate literary or historical connection between the two documents. Rather, from a social-scientific perspective, it is argued that both compositions reflect some similar group dynamics common to most communities. Moreover, some features of the strategies taken by both documents to resolve these actual or potential community tensions resemble each other, while the differences between the two show different perspectives on the community issues as well as different paradigms on conflict resolution.

[25] Deppe, *Sayings of Jesus*, 135.
[26] van de Sandt, "James 4:1-4," 49–52.

Chapter 8
Conclusions

This study commenced with the aim of exploring the possibility of reading James and the *Didache* from a perspective of group maintenance. By so doing, it was hoped that some light would be shed on the rhetorical situations, rhetorical strategies, and coherence of both compositions. With the aid of social-scientific theories, this study investigated the possible community tensions reflected in these two early Christian writings and the possible impacts the authors or redactors wanted to have on the audience.

The first step was to explore the possible community tensions reflected in the compositions. With the help of results from studies in group dynamics, especially those studies in conflict escalation and resolution, the concerns for conflicts in James and the *Didache* were highlighted. In particular, the focus of this study was on intra-communal conflicts, which seems to be a perspective not sufficiently explored in previous studies on James and the *Didache*. This was done in chapter 3 and 5. It must be cautioned that the discussions in these chapters are not supposed to be a detailed reconstruction of the target communities of the two documents. Rather, the discussions were based on the assumption that those group dynamics and tensions are common phenomena of any group across time, location and culture. This assumption can be justified on the one hand by the frequent applications of these theories of group dynamics in sociological studies, which indicate their wide applicability, and on the other hand by general human experiences of conflicts. Hence, it is highly likely that there would be some tensions in the early Christian communities.[1] Therefore, it is reasonable to try to discern some conflict situations in James and the *Didache*. By paying attention to these community tensions, it is hoped to provide another key to unlock the messages of the two documents.

[1] Indeed, one of the main concerns in *1 Clem* is the disposal of some presbyters in the Corinthian church. This indicates that community strife was an actual problem in the early church around the end of the first century.

After investigating the possible community tensions reflected in the compositions, this study proceeded to analyze the rhetorical strategies James and the *Didache* used to maintain the cohesiveness of the audience. Results from social-scientific studies were utilized again to give a framework for the analysis. However, this study did not stick to one social-scientific model. Rather, insights from several theories were applied. These include the social identity theory, Allport's contact model and some results from conflict theories.[2] It was discovered that both documents attempt in their own ways to reduce the conflict in the community of believers and to enhance the solidarity of the group. One of the main strategies is to strengthen the social identity of the audience. As the believers gain a stronger sense of being a group, they would be more willing to follow the norms of the community, to settle the rifts among them, and to support each other. However, the two documents also have some different perspectives on conflict resolution. The most obvious difference is that the *Didache* is more regulative than James, offering more precise codes of behaviour for the audience. This difference could be explained by the different genres of the two writings, but may also reflect different views on community conflict.

After exploring the conflict situations and group maintenance strategies of James and the *Didache*, and after comparing the similarities and differences between them, some final words may be said on the inferences of these investigations.

8.1 Purpose of James and the *Didache*

The above study has shown that community conflicts are indeed reflected in the two writings. Although it is believed that both writings had a broad audience, consisting of several local communities, and hence no single portrayal of the audience situation can be offered, it is still reasonable to regard the conflicts reflected in the texts were occurring in some of the local communities among the audience and were regarded as potential danger for other local communities. Moreover, it is argued that the admonitions in James and the *Didache* can potentially assist the resolution of these conflicts in the community. Hence, it can be reasonably concluded that one of

[2] See the introduction in section 1.3.1.

the purposes of the composition of James and the *Didache* is to deal with the community tensions known to the authors, so that the harmony and cohesiveness of the faith community can be restored.

8.2 Coherence of James and the *Didache*

Since Dibelius' influential commentary on James,[3] this New Testament book has been widely regarded as a loose collection of traditional sayings, lacking continuity in thought. On the other hand, the *Didache* is also commonly viewed as an accumulation of redaction layers which does not necessarily convey coherent messages. These trends of interpretations have altered in recent decades.[4] More attention has been paid to issues such as the structure and the theology of James, so that the unity of the writing is more perceivable. Some studies on the *Didache* also read the composition as a unity. This study undertakes to contribute to these discussions by arguing that the perspective of group maintenance can be another lens to reveal the inner coherence of these two compositions. Different parts of the letter of James serve the same purpose of maintaining the cohesiveness of the audience. Similarly, the various parts and redaction layers of the *Didache* also have the common aim of strengthening the solidarity of the faith community. Later layers are not merely additions to old ones, but the redactors adopted and adapted the older traditions, combining them with other materials in order to deal with later community concerns. Therefore, both the letter of James and the *Didache* can be reasonably read as coherent compositions.

8.3 Reception of James and the *Didache*

The differences in the ways James and the *Didache* deal with community issues may also help to explain the different reception of the two compositions. While James ended up in the New Testament canon, the *Didache* had been forgotten after the first few centuries until its rediscovery by Bryennios,[5] although most of its contents are adopted in later documents such as *Apostolic Constitutions* VII. James tackles the community issues more by appealing to believers' inner dispositions.

[3] Dibelius, *James*.
[4] See the review in section 2.1
[5] Bryennios, *Διδαχὴ τῶν δώδεκα ἀποστόλων*.

Attitudes such as meekness, mutual caring and endurance are emphasized in the letter's teachings, but few precise codes of behaviour are offered. These admonitions have general applicability through different situations. On the contrary, the *Didache* attempts to maintain the order of the community by giving explicit instructions on community behaviours. It is essentially a manual of community life. As O'Loughlin observes, manuals are vital at the time but have a short shelf-life.[6] As the community situations of the early church changed, most of the instructions of the *Didache,* save the moral instructions in the Two Ways tradition, become not directly applicable. Hence the document has to be modified into later church orders.

8.4 Limitations

Two limitations of this study should especially be noted. First, the investigation of the community situations reflected in the two compositions depends on mirror readings of the texts and is based on the general observation that conflict is an almost universal group phenomenon. However, the partial evident should not prohibit the investigation into the background to the texts.[7] Furthermore, as there is a fair probability for those tensions existing in the early faith communities, one can still talk about the group maintenance strategies of James and the *Didache*. Second, the social-scientific models used in this study are not particularly focused on Greco-Roman or Mediterranean cultures. The results are modern, some are based on experiments done by modern social-scientists. Hence, the applicability of these theories for the interpretation of the ancient texts may be questioned. However, this study tried to appeal to those social-scientific theories which are regarded to have wide applicability across various cultures. Hence, it is still fairly reasonable to use these social-scientific results to assist the interpretation of James and the *Didache*.

8.5 Further Studies

Two lines of future studies would be suggested. Firstly, according to social identity theories and conflict theories, intergroup rivalries are closely tied to ingroup solidarity. Hence, if outgroup derogation is one of the strategies used by early

[6] O'Loughlin, "Source of Picturing," 88.
[7] Foster, *Colossians*, 105.

Christian authors to strengthen the solidarity of the faith community, as suggested in this study, this implies that there would also be increasing tensions or even hatred between the Christian communities and other groups. Indeed, this result is observable in church history. Hence, the relation between the group maintenance strategy of these writings and the later conflicts between the church and other groups may be further explored, in terms of, for example, the adoption of these two documents in later writings.

Secondly, the people-of-God identity is the most important basis for group maintenance in both James and the *Didache*. What light does this observation shed on the group maintenance strategy for modern church communities is another question worthy of further investigation, especially when Christians nowadays are more aware of and more reliant on various modern conflict management methods. Moreover, if the Christian communities are to follow the group maintenance strategies of James and the *Didache*, would it be inevitable that dislike towards and segregation from rival groups arise as side-effects? Does James and the *Didache* offer hints on how to maintain the solidarity of the faith community while at the same time taking heed to the command of loving one's enemy? These pastoral issues can be further investigated.

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